COSMOPOLITAN

SO
THIS
WAS
THE
**best
sex
position**
ALL
ALONG??

THE
EVIDENCE,
PAGE 56

"I was told
there would be
snacks."
—HAROLD

**HELLO,
YOUR
ROARING
'20s ARE
HERE**
SEQUINS
OPTIONAL
PAGE 20

PRESENTING:
**THE
12 BOSSES
WE ALL
DESERVE**
MEET THE
NEW
C-SUITE

# Venus WILLIAMS

"COME FOR
ME IF YOU
WANT TO—
BUT YOU
WON'T COME
AGAIN."

BEWARE
THIS
**CREEPY
CULTISH
DATING
TREND**

FRESHNESS
UPGRADE
HELPS STOP ODOR BEFORE IT STARTS
Camila Mendes
SCAN TO BUY
Hover phone camera over code
Secret
COCONUT
48 HR INVISIBLE SOLID
ANTIPERSPIRANT
Secret
ALL STRENGTH
NO SWEAT
Available in over
10 AMAZING SCENTS!

# october

roperty
railings will
elivered to
Unit
& 8 Av
500/4501
New York City Transit

**76** BUNDLE UP IN FALL'S CHICEST TRENDS

Coat hugs: Now totally a real (and v cozy) thing.

Daily Paper puffer. Christian Louboutin boots. Joanna Laura Constantine earrings. Prada belt bag.

## cover stories

20 Hello, your roaring '20s are here
56 So this was the best sex position all along??
60 Beware this creepy, cultish dating trend
62 Venus Williams
70 Presenting: the 12 bosses we all deserve

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## ON THE COVER

Saint Laurent top and skirt, Nordstrom. Roger Vivier heels. Jennifer Zeuner Jewelry earrings. Jennifer Fisher rings.

Hair: Angela Meadows. Makeup: Natasha Gross at NatashaGrossArtistry.com. Manicure: Andrea Viera at Creative Management. Tailor: Cynthia CrusanNoble. Fashion assistant: Britney Diaz. Production: Howard Goldmann at HG Producers. To get Venus's look, try Dream Radiant Liquid Hydrating Foundation, Express Brow 2-in-1 Pencil and Powder, Eyestudio Hyper Easy Liquid Eyeliner, Cheek Heat Gel-Cream Blush, and Color Sensational Shine Compulsion Lipstick, all by Maybelline New York.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAI MARI. FASHION BY CASSIE ANDERSON. FOR SHOPPING INFORMATION, GO TO COSMOPOLITAN.COM.

cover photograph by **AB+DM**
cover fashion by **MICAELA ERLANGER**

# Our issue by the numbers

What it took to make this mag.

By MARIAH SCHLOSSMANN

**1** blazing shirt that made an editor the Queen of Flavortown, page 22.

In nugs and manis we trust.

# 42

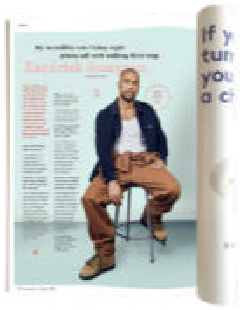
frozen chicken nuggets *not* harmed in the making of page 46.

# 36

EXISTENTIAL CRISES AFTER REALIZING WE'LL SOON BE EXPECTED TO LOOK SEMIPROFESSIONAL FOR WORK AGAIN. BUT...

**18** *Cosmo* pets who are *very* ready to eventually have their homes back during the day.

**6** meditation pillows bought while editing the story on page 16. What? We know a good idea when we see one.



**3** months spent interviewing

**13** legendary activists to bring you

**5** steps for actually, seriously changing the world. Get started on page 36.

**1** lifesaving Tinder date. We're not kidding. Read more on page 58.

**16 STAFF FALL ENTHUSIASTS WHO NEVER STOPPED WEARING SWEATERS BECAUSE COZY = MORE PRODUCTIVE.**

**13** Wi-Fi outages that messed with some v important deadlines. (Jupiter Retrograde was feeling frisky.)

**8 different smoothies passionately delivered by this celebrity assistant, page 12.**

HAND HOLDING WAFFLE: TED + CHELSEA CAVANAUGH.
KIM DUONG IN FLAME SHIRT: KAT WIRSING.

Unilever
WE STYLE TO
Defy Gravity
TRESemmé
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PRO PURE
MICELLAR
MOISTURE
SHAMPOO
0%
SULFATES
PARABENS
MINERAL OIL
16 FL OZ | 473 mL
TRESemmé
USED BY PROFESSIONALS
PRO PURE
MICELLAR
MOISTURE
CONDITIONER
0%
SILICONES
PARABENS
MINERAL OIL
16 FL OZ | 473 mL

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**0%**

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- SILICONES
- PARABENS
- DMDM HYDANTOIN
- MINERAL OILS
- DYES

TRESemmé
USED BY PROFESSIONALS

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# SCENT OF A WOMAN

**As the spokesperson for Cacharel's new Yes I Am Glorious, Shay Mitchell embodies the fragrance's theme of confidence in a bottle.**

Imagine following Shay Mitchell around for a day in Los Angeles to a glam photo shoot that ends with a convertible driving off into the sunset and a spritz of perfume. That's exactly what Cacharel did for their new fragrance, Yes I Am Glorious. So, what does the juice smell like? A bright burst of florals and fruits.

Adriana Medina

Scan to Shop!

"Simple yet complex." That's how Adriana Medina, Vice President Perfumer at Givaudan, describes the perfume she created—a blend of white peach nectar and mandarin oil top notes, magnolia and white flowers middle notes, and a base of milkshake with a touch of sandalwood. Glorious is the fourth iteration in the Yes I Am scent collection. "The DNA all the fragrances share is that addictiveness and creamy, milky effect," Medina says, "You also need a touch of spice. By playing with peach and florals, it's quite unique."

Medina aimed to bottle up fun, vibrant energy. "I wanted to create a fragrance that evokes a feeling of joy, happiness, and youth," she says. That's what makes Mitchell the perfect spokesperson for Yes I Am Glorious. The actress and entrepreneur tells us all about it.

PROD. YES, I AM GLORIOUS
SCENE 17
TAKE 2
ROLL/MEDIA 1
CLIP 2
SHAY MITCHELL
FRAMERATE
RESOLUTION
DATE
CODEC
FORMAT
ISO

Yes I Am GLORIOUS

## Why did working with Cacharel appeal to you?

**SHAY MITCHELL:** It's such a timeless brand. I have fond memories of seeing my mom get ready and always having a Cacharel perfume, Anaïs Anaïs, on her dressing table. They've always been on the cutting edge of celebrating female empowerment; they do that in their messaging in the campaign.

## How is fragrance part of your self-care ritual?

**SM:** Before I walk out of my closet, as soon as everything else is put together, I do a little spritz. It's sparkle, like magic at the end. I feel confident when I come into a room. I love the smell of it because it has all the notes that I love—everything from peaches to magnolias to a cream base with an undertone of sandalwood. It's a little feel-good moment.

## What are your favorite smells?

**SM:** I have a weird one: I love the smell of wet pavement right after it rains. I love the smell of a fire, and walking past an ice cream shop, which is also why this is my favorite fragrance because it has hints of vanilla milkshake from the cream. You know when they're making an ice cream cone? That is the best smell.

## What's your earliest scent memory?

**SM:** My mom's perfume. I also have really fond memories of my grandma's hair spray; she used a whole bottle every day. I use it now and then and it always reminds me of her. I love that about fragrance because there are so many times where I'll catch a scent from somebody that reminds me of high school or this dance or person. It always is tethered to a memory.

cacharel Yes I Am GLORIOUS #YesIAmGlorious | #CacharelSistas | #ShowYourGlow

Yes I Am
GLORIOUS
THE NEW FRAGRANCE
with Shay Mitchell
cacharel

# Questions from the editor

Well, firstly, I want to know Venus's best tennis tips for absolutely terrible tennis players, but I'll spare you and save it for the text thread. The truth is that this woman—our October cover star and fellow judge of our New C-Suite project, which shines a light on female entrepreneurs of color changing the game just like she did (page 70)—has long been an inspiration to me and someone whose drive and power I've sought to understand and emulate. Turn to page 62 if you feel the same, because her interview with writer Sylvia Obell is unparalleled. But Venus is fun and funny and fascinating beyond her (zillions of) accomplishments. I asked her to give us a little taste, here in her own handwriting.

**Jessica Pels**
**Editor-in-Chief**
**@Jessica_Pels**

## the cosmo quiz

FULL NAME

Venus Ebony Starr

CHILDHOOD NICKNAME

DubDizzle, UDubski, Torch haha

WHAT I'VE COMPLETED ON MY BUCKET LIST

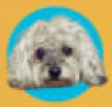
I've never had a bucket list,
I don't believe in planning!

FOOD COMBO THAT I LOVE BUT EVERYONE ELSE THINKS IS GROSS

Caviar on Everything! Cavi!

IF I WERE A SPLURGE ITEM, I'D BE A

Condo in NYC, with
hot guys visiting me :))



THE ONE PRODUCT THAT GOES WITH ME FROM BAG TO BAG

Harold my dog!
He goes everywhere with
me in a bag

MOST USED EMOJI ON MY PHONE

lol

FICTIONAL CHARACTER I'D MAKE OUT WITH

Every dude on the Justice League,
The Avengers, Thor, Superman, WOW!

ONE THING I'VE LEARNED ABOUT LOVE IS

Love is relative!

~~~

Bet on yourself,
that's your best Bet!
All things for God

Venus Williams

~~~

I looove the illustrations artist Lindsey Made This created for Venus's cover story—cute, no?

PELS: TYLER JOE. WILLIAMS: PHOTOGRAPH BY MICAELA ERLANGER. BURBERRY TOP AND SKIRT, SAKSFIFTHAVENUE.COM. JOURNELLE BRALETTE. SARA ROBERTSSON EARRINGS. JENNIFER FISHER RINGS (LEFT). KHIRY RING (RIGHT). ILLUSTRATION: LINDSEY MADE THIS.

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Smiling because...
POCKETS!

KATIE THOMPSON/GALLERY STOCK.

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ALL YOUR THOUGHTS ON...

# How you're different now since, uh, everything

It's been a minute since we've checked in about the pandemic.

By SARAH WELDON

### So, are you still at the same job as before?

38% Actually, yes!

25% I was laid off.

23% Nah, I left.

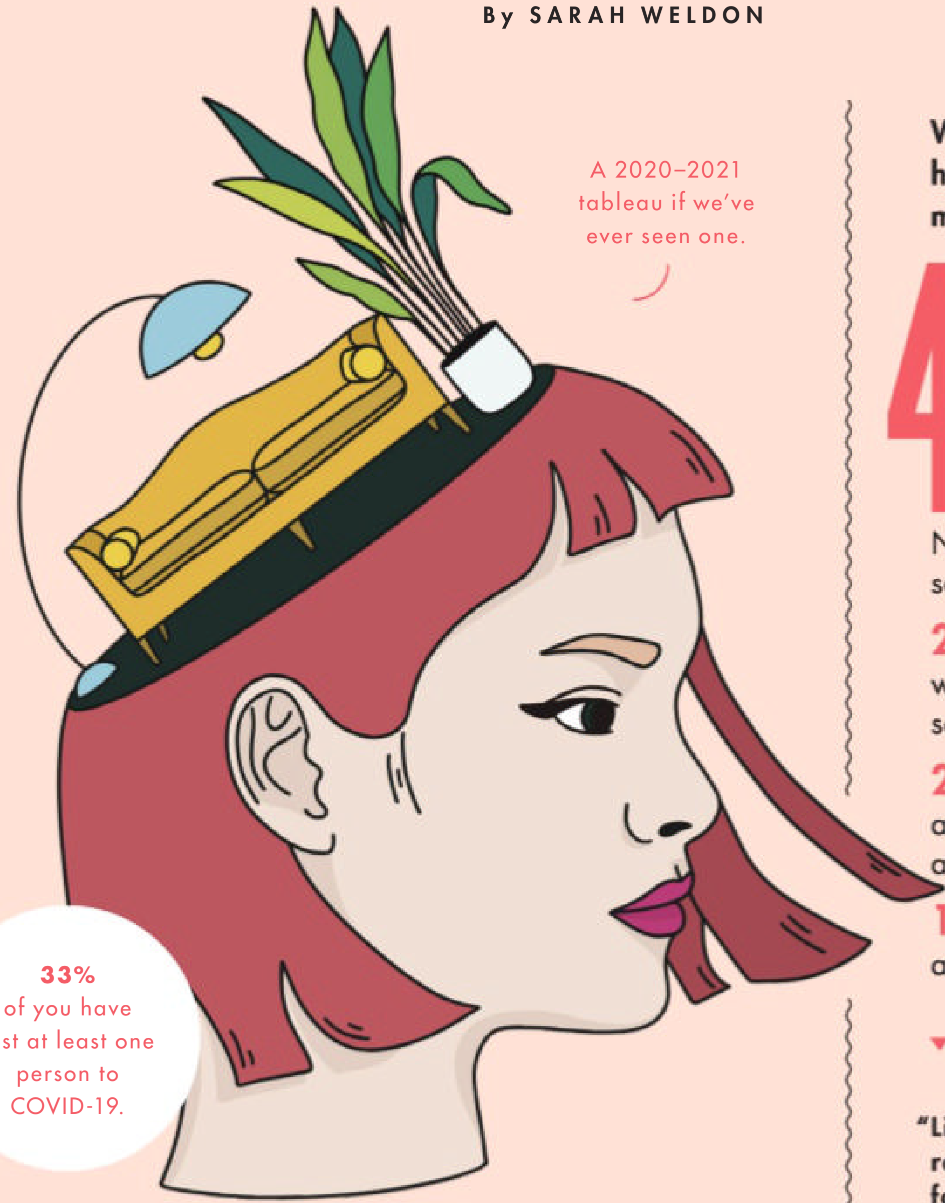
14% I quit when they said we had to return to the office.

"I've realized it's no longer a cute look to make work your whole life."
—ELIZABETH*

"Quitting my teaching job for a full-time WFH gig has made me so much happier."
—SAM*

"I had just started my dream job...and then lost my dad to COVID-19."
—ROSEMARY

"My job at a preschool said we had to be back in June 2020 with zero safety protocols. I didn't feel safe and resigned." —SARAH



A 2020–2021 tableau if we've ever seen one.

33% of you have lost at least one person to COVID-19.

### What about home? Did you make any moves?

48% Nope—still in the same spot!

21% I'm crashing with my fam now to save money.

21% I packed up and moved far, far away.

10% I fully bought a house?

"Living with roommates wasn't it for me since I've been working remotely. I now live alone, and it's honestly liberating."
—GRACE

"Before, I had done a lot of work with managing my anxiety and depression. But all of that progress was lost after I moved back home into my childhood bedroom."
—EMILIA*

### Switching gears: Are you still tight with your friend group?

55% Only my dearest friends.

23% Honestly, maybe even closer than before.

22% Nope. We've moved on.

"I never knew I could be someone who cuts off their best friend. But they refused to get vaccinated and I'm immunocompromised. It was so worth it." —ALANA*

*NAME HAS BEEN CHANGED.

Illustration by NATALIA VOLGINA

Just a list of

# RIDICULOUSLY AMBITIOUS POP CULTURE HALLOWEEN COSTUMES YOU SHOULD ATTEMPT THIS YEAR

By ELIZABETH ANN ENTENMAN

1

### NICOLE KIDMAN'S COAT IN *THE UNDOING*

The green one, obviously. If you don't know where to start, simply rent a Grinch costume.

2

### TOM HOLLAND AND ZENDAYA MAKING OUT

But, twist, you're the internet melting down over it. You dress as molten lava.

3

### *SNL*'S BOWEN YANG AS THE TITANIC ICEBERG

A+ excuse to have a breakdown and yell, "WHY ARE YOU ATTACKING ME?!"

4

### GLENN CLOSE DOING "DA BUTT" AT THE OSCARS

BYO table, little lamp, and shocked audience members (most importantly Daniel Kaluuya, *if* he's available).

5

### CARDI B AND MEGAN THEE STALLION'S GRAMMYS PERFORMANCE

Specifically this moment. Dress up like a spider and carry some mac and cheese (IYKYK).

6

### EVERY MOVIE THAT GOT DELAYED, COMBINED

Pair ScarJo's *Black Widow* wig with Timothée Chalamet's *Dune* suit, carry a dalmatian.

7

### OPRAH MID–MEGHAN AND HARRY INTY

Carry a sign that says, "Were you siLENT or were you siLENCED?" and do that very precise hand motion she did. Maybe wear a pink sweater.

8

### PETE DAVIDSON'S SOON-TO-BE-REMOVED TATTOOS

The shark. The Snapchat ghost. The Tootsie Pop owl. Bonus if you can somehow also be a tombstone to memorialize the tats we've lost along the way.

High fives all around for winning Halloween.

KIDMAN: GOTHAM/GC IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES. MEGAN THEE STALLION AND CARDI B: FRANCIS SPECKER/CBS VIA GETTY IMAGES.

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LOTS OF FLAVOR—
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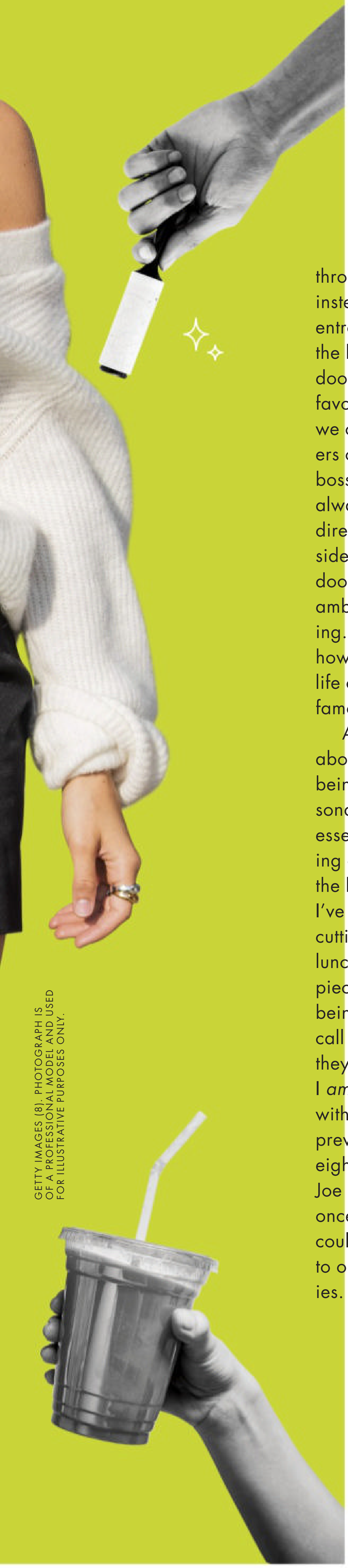
# Inside the life of a celebrity assistant

It's all fun and games until you have to lie about your boss's poop schedule.

As told to MIA BRABHAM

**When you work on television and movie sets for a living,** your employment is inconsistent at best. You'll be on one project for a few months, then you'll be scrambling to find your next gig. I was recently in this predicament, having just finished a job as a production assistant, when a friend of a friend connected me to *their* friend (yes, this is really how it works) who happened to be the former personal assistant to a Very Important TV Star. That former assistant recommended me for their old job and… here I am. Since I'd already been tending to multiple actors on-set, I figured there was no way it could be harder to tend to just one, right? Well.

The thing is, if your boss is famous enough, like mine is, an assistant's role is basically to take their place in "normal" life. I do things like order their lunch, answer their emails, make all their hotel reservations under an alias, and run across the city to fetch birthday gifts for their A-list friends (who never know the card in the box was written by me). To help my boss avoid getting bombarded by photographers and fans, I also take their kids to the park and sign for their packages—nobody wants to be papped like Ben Affleck dropping his Dunkin' while opening his front door. I know entire staffs at restaurants so we can walk



GETTY IMAGES (8). PHOTOGRAPH IS OF A PROFESSIONAL MODEL AND USED FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY.

through the kitchen instead of the main entrance, and I have the key to the back door of my boss's favorite hotel so that we can avoid reporters out front. My boss's movements are always intentional and direct—our time outside is basically going door to door with no ambling or meandering. I've seen firsthand how weirdly isolating life can be for really famous people.

And I do feel bad about that. But… being a celeb's personal assistant is also essentially like adopting a human child in the body of an adult. I've been tasked with cutting up my boss's lunch into bite-size pieces. And with being their wake-up call every day (like, they don't set alarms—I *am* the alarm). And with, one time for a previous boss, getting eight smoothies from Joe and the Juice at once because they couldn't decide which to order. Eight smoothies. They took a sip of each flavor, threw out the seven they didn't like, and didn't even flinch.

### SO HOW MUCH DOES THE JOB ACTUALLY PAY?

This story's anonymous source makes $850/week, with one year of personal-assisting experience under their belt. Another anonymous assistant reported making $1,500/week, but they have four years of experience and they're on call for their boss 24/7. Yeah, we'll let you decide whether that's worth it.

## Being a celeb's assistant is like adopting a child in the body of an adult.

Which brings me to the diarrhea incidents. You read that right: incidents, plural, on multiple jobs. I've had to lie and take the fall when my boss was late after a case of the runs. When they took forever in the bathroom, I had to call in to tell the production team that it was my fault: I "confused the call time" and "overslept."

Okay, yes, there are also supremely glamorous parts to being a personal assistant, like casually chartering private jets, being gifted bottles of wine that cost more than a month's rent, and having Idris Elba on speed dial (yes, I do, and yes, it's tempting, but sadly I refrain bc professionalism).

Also, this job does come with, in a strange way, a sense of power. Hollywood is full of gatekeepers, and I am my boss's. Any information that goes to my boss goes through me first, whether it's an executive asking to make dinner plans or a director working out a creative vision. I even get to do a first read of scripts for movies my boss might star in. And not gonna lie, saying no to some of the most important people in Hollywood is really, really fun.

So while I definitely do get a lot of bullshit thrown my way, I'm hanging on to the possibility that all of this crap (see what I did there?) may eventually be worth it. I'm in rooms with some of the biggest names in show business, and if you're working your ass off, you never know where it may lead. Currently, it's leading to a collection of fancy-ass wine, and that's fine by me—for now.

**SERIOUSLY THO**

What would you do if you had Idris Elba on speed dial?

# The Girl Group Renaissance is upon us

And it's better than anything we had before.

By STARR BOWENBANK

**If you were** to unearth your middle-school-era iPod (Nano, obviously, in hot pink) and miraculously find the charging cord to turn it on, I bet I could tell ya what song was the star of every playlist: "Survivor." Yes, the Destiny's Child breakup bop that, even though you'd never been on an actual date, resonated *deeply* with you. Probably because it came from a girl group—and girl groups were *it* in the early aughts.

They were #FriendshipGoals before hashtags were a thing, and their music made us feel un-freaking-stoppable. At least, that is, until bands like Danity Kane, the Pussycat Dolls, and the Spice Girls before them ripped out our hearts when they decided to disband.

Luckily, though, trends get recycled every 20ish years (see scarves as tops, Bennifer), and music genres are no exception. South Korea brought the girl group back first, with acts like Blackpink, Twice, and Red Velvet. Now, American pop is catching up, but spoiler alert: This time around, the groups are way more reflective of your IRL friend circles than most of their OG counterparts ever were.

These current up-and-comers are giving us real, diverse representation in both race and sexual identity. We've evolved way past nonsense like making one white woman the "main girl" for "marketability" reasons—and damn, does it feel good to finally be seen.

So as we usher in a newer, cooler generation, here are the groups to watch. Get ready to break out whatever the 2021 version of your Nano is and blast their hits.

MEET ME AT THE ALTAR: LINDSEY BARNES. K/DA: @KDA_MUSIC ON INSTAGRAM. CITIZEN QUEEN: CONNOR FRANTA. BOYS WORLD: KAI CRANMORE. JUNE'S DIARY: MARCUS OWENS.

**INSTANTLY ICONIC**

Trust, you'll be replaying tracks from these gems in another 20 years.

1

## Meet Me at the Altar

**MEMBERS:**

Edith, Téa, and Ada

**FOR LOVERS OF:**

Paramore, Flyleaf

**ORIGIN STORY:**

The pop-punk trio met online in 2015 and worked on music remotely for three years (before that was even cool!). Now, they are signed to an alt music label and breaking barriers in a genre heavily dominated by white, cisgender men.

**LISTEN TO THEM WHEN:**

You're in the mood to relive your teen angst but not the generally slut-shame-y nature of a lot of music circa 2005.

2

## K/DA

**MEMBERS:**

Ahri, Akali, Evelynn, and Kai'Sa

**FOR LOVERS OF:**

Blackpink, (G)I-dle

**ORIGIN STORY:**

The makers of *League of Legends* took the coolest female characters from their video game and turned them into an entirely CGI pop group. Borrowing voices from Kim Petras, Jaira Burns, Madison Beer, and K-pop stars Soyeon and Miyeon, among others, the "girls" blend hard-hitting beats with addictive dashes of K-pop.

**LISTEN TO THEM WHEN:**

You're feeling yourself and ready to sweat through a workout or twerkout. Expect a 200 percent increase in self-confidence.

3

## Citizen Queen

**MEMBERS:**

Hannah, Kaedi, Nina, Cora, and Kaylah

**FOR LOVERS OF:**

Fifth Harmony, Pentatonix

**ORIGIN STORY:**

Ever seen *Pitch Perfect*? Citizen Queen LIVED it. After going through a cappella boot camps and auditions, the girls joined forces to create pop anthems and covers.

**LISTEN TO THEM WHEN:**

You're recovering from serious heartbreak (start with the tear-jerking ballad "Y") and then when you need to remind yourself you really are that bitch ("Call Me Queen").

4

## Boys World

**MEMBERS:**

Elana, Makhyli, Olivia, Lillian, and Queenie

**FOR LOVERS OF:**

Spice Girls, the original *Winx Club*

**ORIGIN STORY:**

All five members were scouted and then placed in a house to train together as singers and dancers. (Magic ensued, obvi.)

**LISTEN TO THEM WHEN:**

You're missing your best friends. (As in, the ones you may not have been able to see in person for a *looong* time.)

5

## June's Diary

**MEMBERS:**

Kristal, Ashly, Brienna, Gabrielle, and Shyann

**FOR LOVERS OF:**

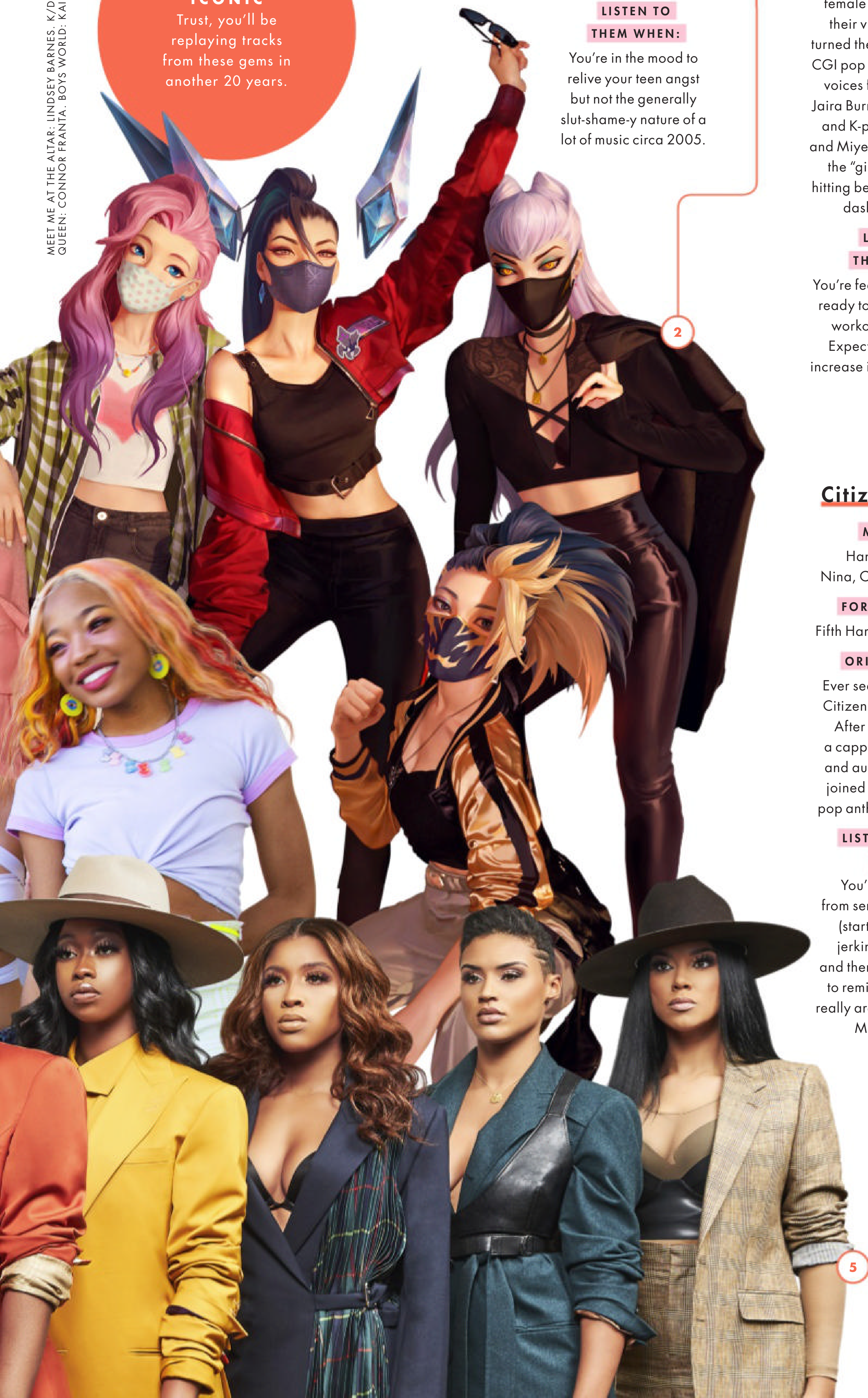
Destiny's Child, Danity Kane

**ORIGIN STORY:**

Brought together by former Destiny's Child member Kelly Rowland, these five women make music about some of the most relatable topics: love, heartbreak, and the sometimes insufferable nature of men.

**LISTEN TO THEM WHEN:**

That person you're "talking to" starts getting on your nerves...but also when that same person starts making you feel on top of the world. You know how it is.



SUMMER DOUBLE ISSUE

WU-TANG CLAN

OASIS

BLUES TRAVELER

JAMES TAYLOR

RADIOHEAD

# RollingStone

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POP TARTS

## SPICE GIRLS CONQUER THE WORLD

P.J. O'ROURKE INSIDE AFRICA

FORTRESS AMERICA

BY WILLIAM GREIDER

ELTON JOHN AT HOME

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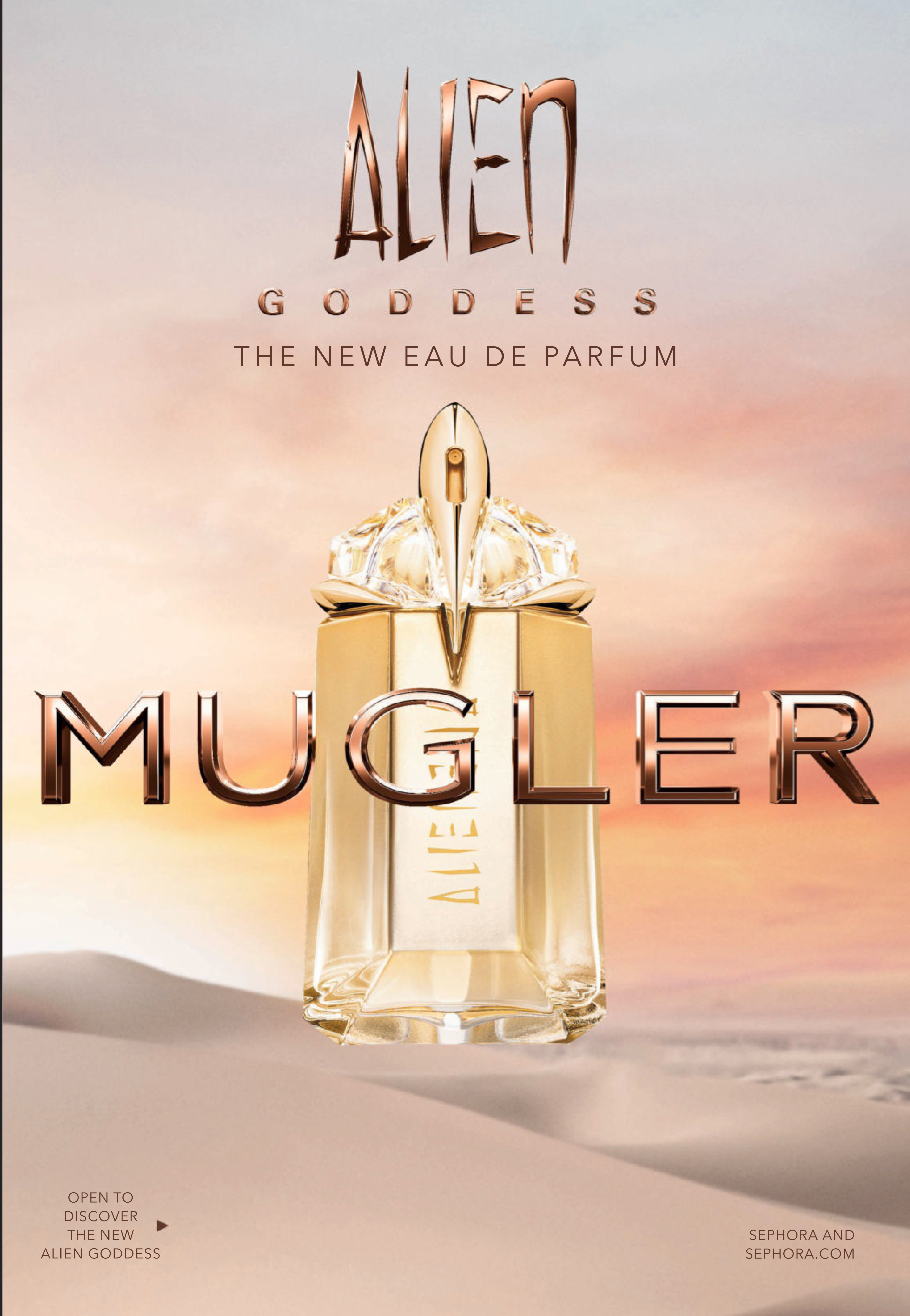
ALIEN
GODDESS
THE NEW
EAU DE PARFUM
MUGLER.COM
WILLOW SMITH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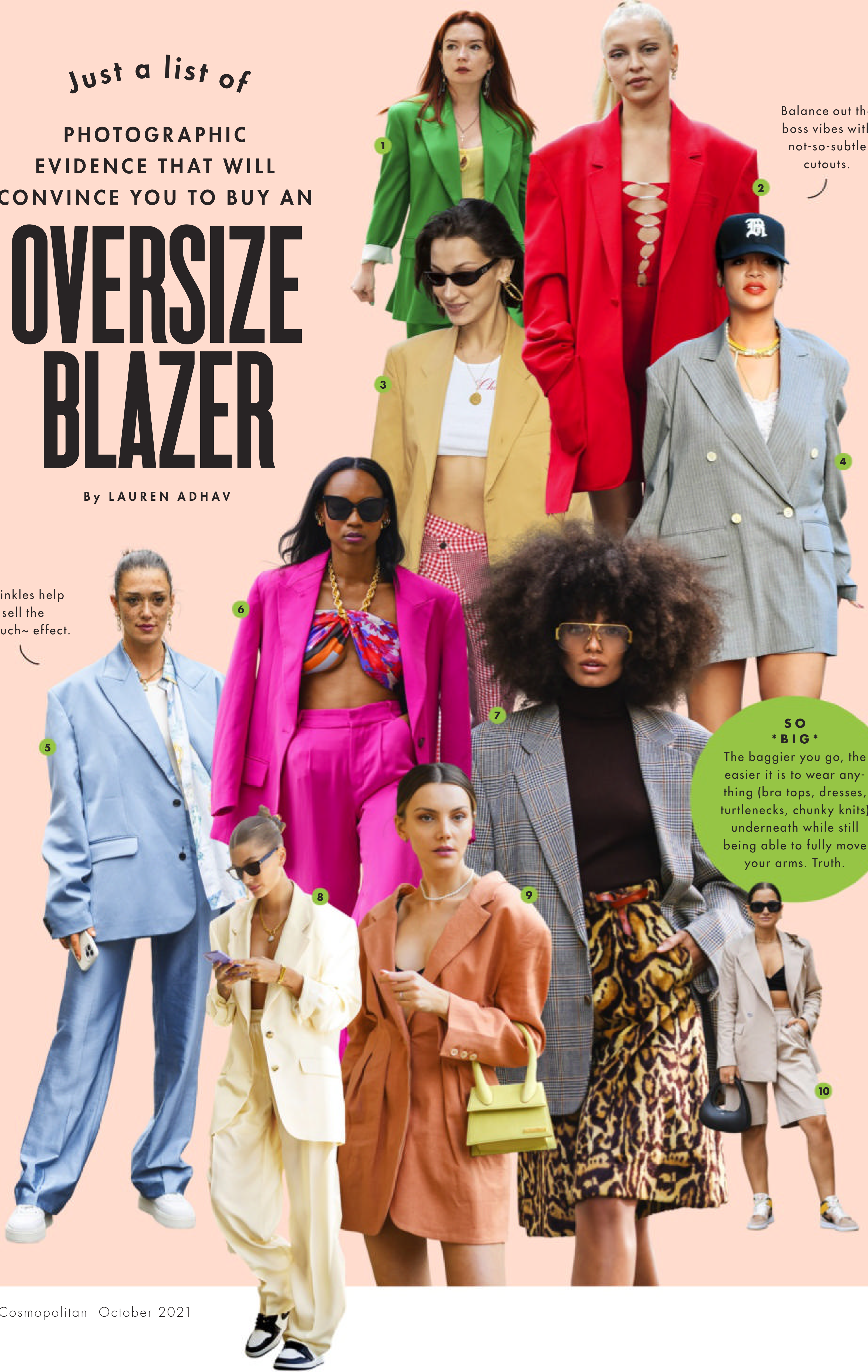
# fashion

Just a list of

PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE THAT WILL CONVINCE YOU TO BUY AN

# OVERSIZE BLAZER

By LAUREN ADHAV



Balance out the boss vibes with not-so-subtle cutouts.

Wrinkles help sell the ~slouch~ effect.

**SO *BIG***

The baggier you go, the easier it is to wear anything (bra tops, dresses, turtlenecks, chunky knits) underneath while still being able to fully move your arms. Truth.

NASTASIA IAVORSCAIA (GREEN BLAZER), REGINA ANIKIY (RED BLAZER), ALICIA AYLIES (GRAY TWEED BLAZER), MODEL IN BEIGE BLAZER, OLESYA SENCHENKO (PEACH BLAZER), MAEVA GIANI MARSHALL (BLUE SUIT), AND EMILIE JOSEPH (PINK SUIT): EDWARD BERTHELOT/GETTY IMAGES. BELLA HADID: ARNOLD JEROCKI/GETTY IMAGES. RIHANNA: JOSIAHW/BACKGRID. HAILEY BIEBER: JOHN SCIULLI/GETTY IMAGES.

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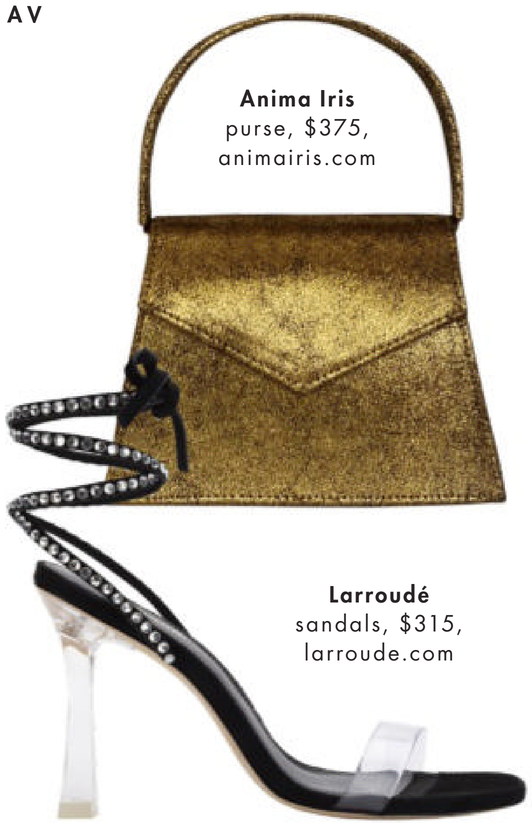
# Yes, we’re entering a new roaring ’20s, and no, there are no flapper dresses

Same name, same swanky soiree vibes, *toooootally* different look.

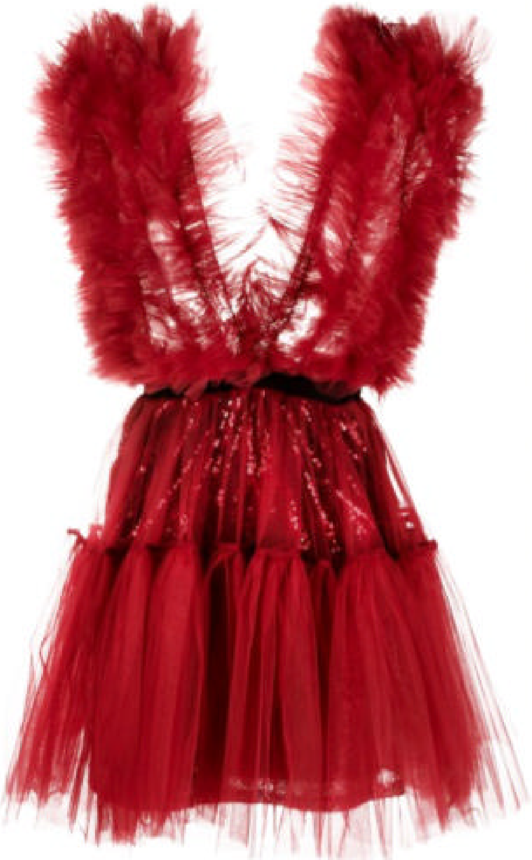
By LAUREN ADHAV

**I’m sure you’ve noticed, but things are getting real glitzy around here.** We spent all of 2020 (and a majority of this year *crying emoji*) inside, but on IG and even IRL, folks are now happily ditching the sweats in favor of over-the-top glam when they do ~go out~. And no shade to the people of yore, but the current party isn’t limited to just one aesthetic (I still love you though, art deco). There are sequins, sure, but also bold colors, mixed materials, daring skin-baring moments, big ol’ ruffles, and hard-to-miss prints. Meaning, whatever you put on for your next (safe, responsible) evening on the town, it better make a statement. Cheers!



**Anima Iris** purse, $375, animairis.com

**Larroudé** sandals, $315, larroude.com



**Alchemy** dress, $690, farfetch.com

**Alessandra Rich** dress. **Cult Gaia** earrings.

**16Arlington** top, $565, farfetch.com

**Maje** dress, $415, maje.com

**Mayol** necklace, $396, mayoljewelry.com

## FOR YOUR RICH ALTER EGO

Channel all the flair of *Gatsby* times—sans the dated, kinda costumey getups—by putting on some can't-miss multicolored gems. And hey, even if you're not headed anywhere fancy, who says you can't dress up?

**Lola Ade** earrings, $40, lolaade.com

**Mango** dress, $120, mango.com

**Mateo** earrings, $450, jaimiegellerjewelry.com

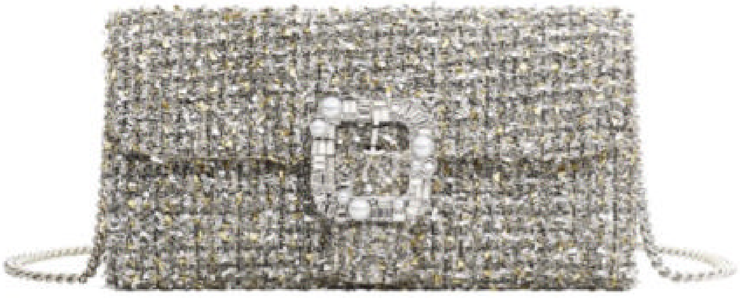
**Halpern** skirt, $579, brownsfashion.com

**Paco Rabanne** bag, $709, farfetch.com

**House of CB** dress, $195, houseofcb.com

**Toga Archives x H&M** leggings, $129, hm.com

**Zara** sandals, $90, similar styles at zara.com



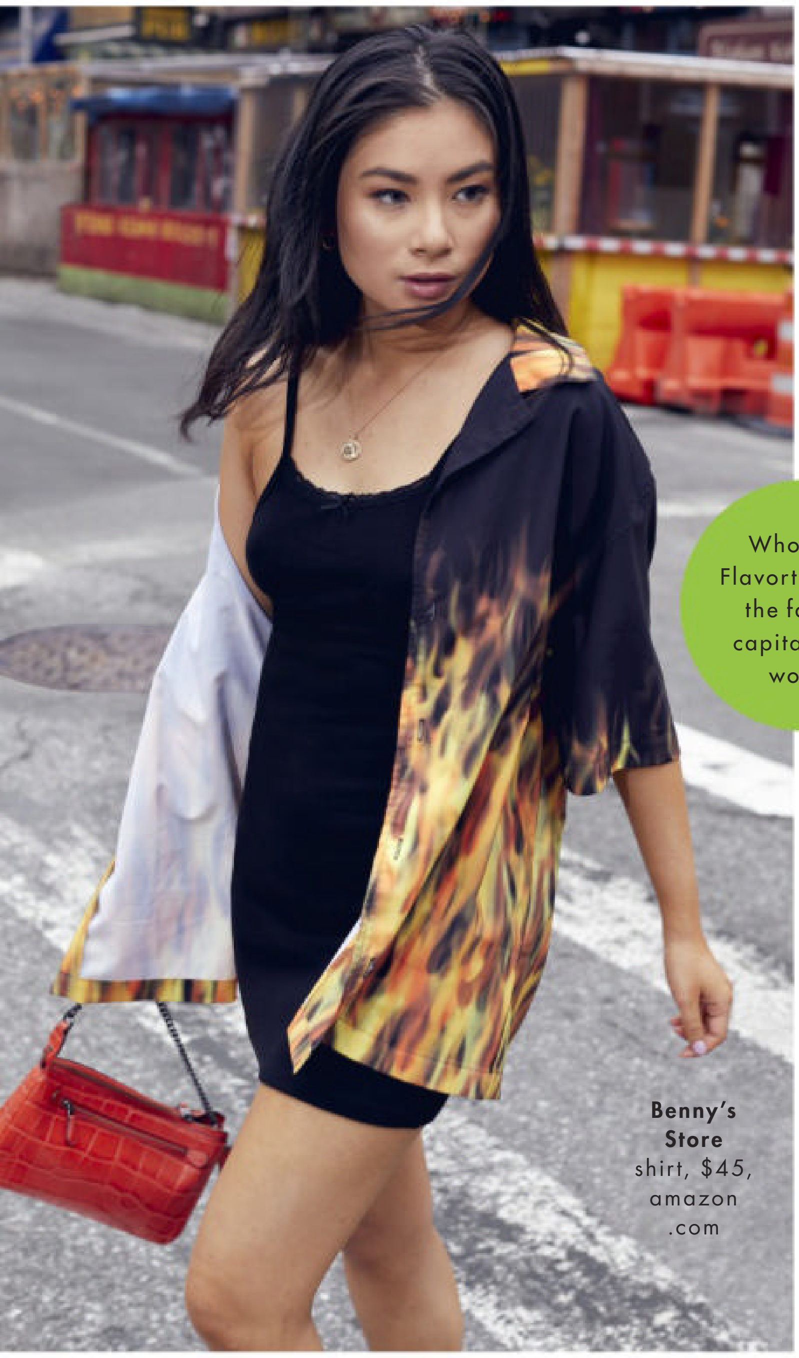
**Kate Spade New York** crossbody, $268, katespade.com

MODEL: RUBEN CHAMORRO.
PRODUCTS: COURTESY BRANDS.

# That time I bought a Guy Fieri shirt as a joke and then literally could not stop wearing it

Welcome to my style saga.

By KIM DUONG



**Benny's Store** shirt, $45, amazon.com

My *hot* take: This was, hands down, the best $45 I've ever spent.

Yves Saint Laurent once said, "Fashions fade; style is eternal," and that is exactly what I whispered the first time I saw myself in my Guy Fieri Halloween costume. I'd been expecting ironic, but what I got was iconic. The fire print, the boxy fit, the unapologetic "Look at me!" energy....

Honestly, it took a while for me, *Cosmo*'s shopping editor and a self-proclaimed fashun person, to stop questioning what it means that I now like to wear—year-round, as a wardrobe staple—a shirt made famous by an, um, cheflebrity. Am I a sham? Do I actually know style? Or am I so highly ascended that faux pas cannot apply to me?

Probably the latter? Which is why you can now catch me outside, grabbing a latte in The Shirt worn as a light jacket over a white tank and jeans. Or inside, at Cosmo HQ, pretending it's totes chill to wear giant flames with flared trousers and leather mules to a meeting. Or on vacay, sauntering around in this bowling-shirt-as-bikini-cover-up. Basically, the top is now a pillar of my personality, and yes, I do get DMs about how I've inspired other folks to dress more Fieri-y (fan mail of the highest caliber, tbh).

But I can't take *all* the credit. Similarly patterned pieces have been trending in recent years. I'm citing Prada's instantly sold-out fall 2018 ($1,200!) take on the in-flame-ous look. And celeb fans like Bella Hadid and Kylie Jenner (two also very highly ascended ppl).

Unfortunately, tho, the legendary design doesn't have the love of the man who popularized it. According to the internet, Fieri actually hates it—he wore this thing *just once* and it *really* stuck with us. And to that I say, my Guy, my brother, your shirt is just too chic. It's done so much for me. But if ditching these influential threads is part of your journey, then I will gladly carry the mantle myself by drinking more lattes and walking the line of "appropriate office attire" in your honor. Thank you for your service.

Who knew Flavortown was the fashion capital of the world?

## Some lit styling ideas

My humble suggestions for what to pair with your flames.

**Ciriaco** bag, $165, madebyciriaco.us

**Rag & Bone** tank, $85, rag-bone.com

**BonBonWhims** earrings, $46, bonbonwhims.com

**Wandler** jeans, $190, matchesfashion.com

**Sandro** sneakers, $245, us.sandro-paris.com

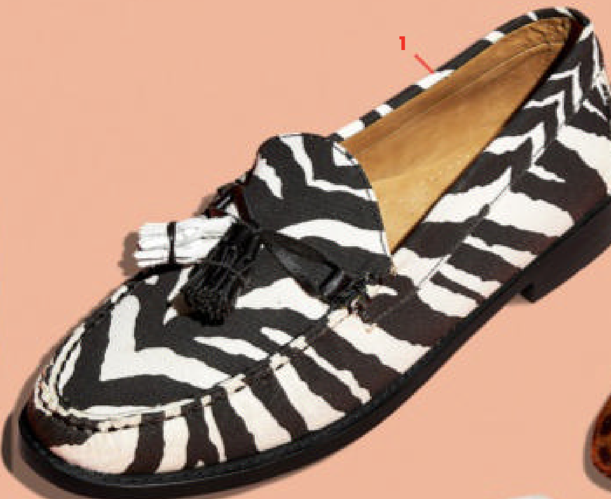
KAT WIRSING.

# Loafers are THE fall shoe, and your inner prep will be all about it

It really doesn't get more sophisticated than this.

By MEGAN UY

**The outfit that comes to mind** may be a pleated skirt and crisp button-down, and that's fair. Also fair: pairing these beauts with jeans and a cardy or a midi dress. The chic, serious cousin to ballet flats can do no wrong.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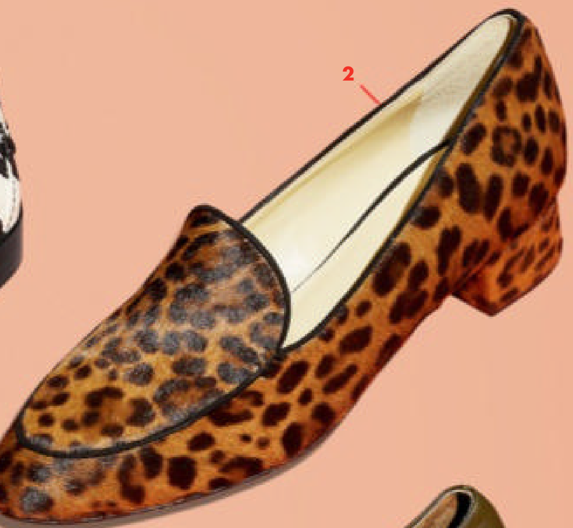
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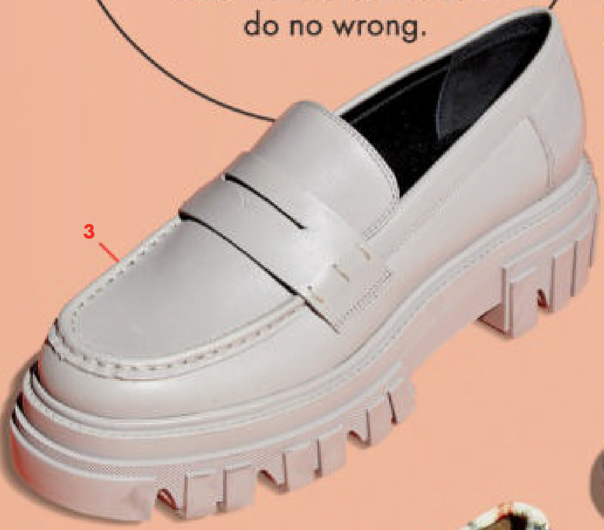
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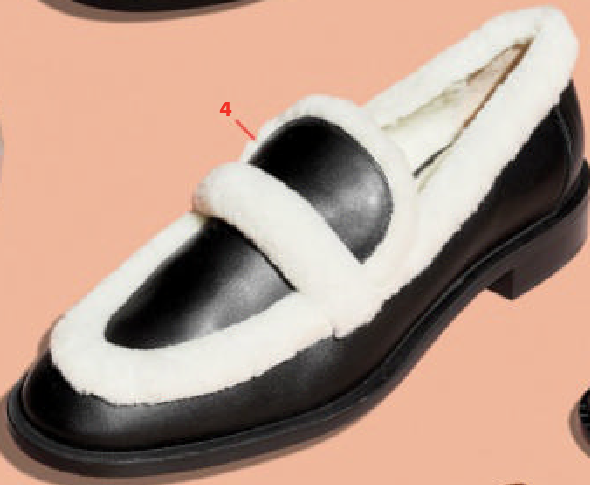
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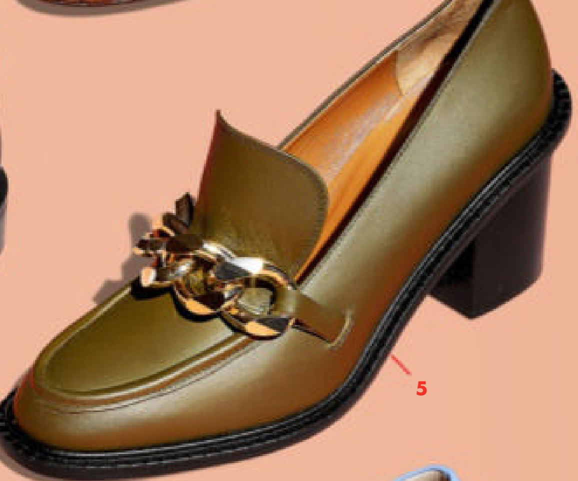
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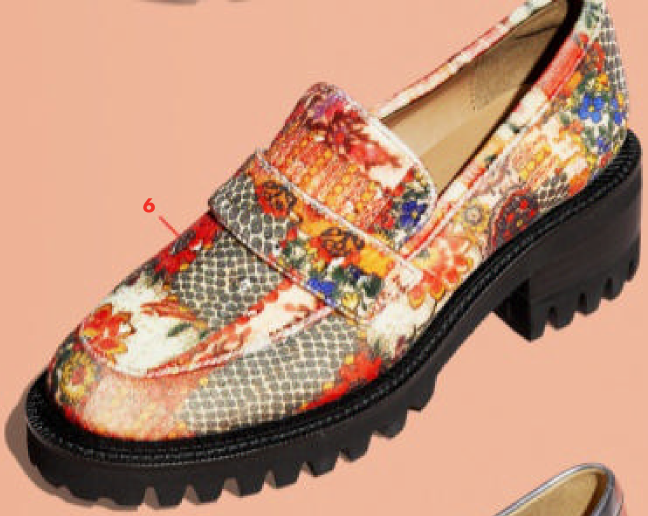
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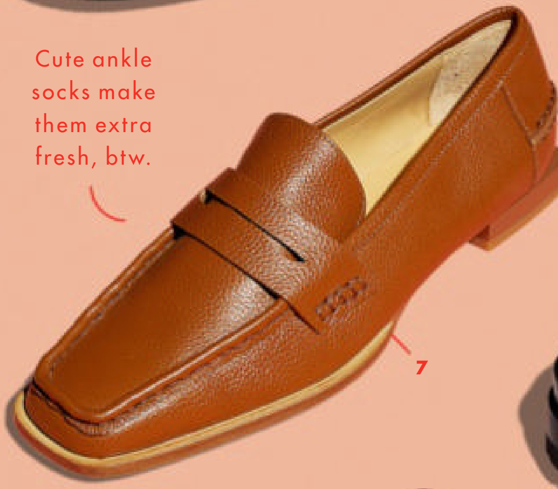
Cute ankle socks make them extra fresh, btw.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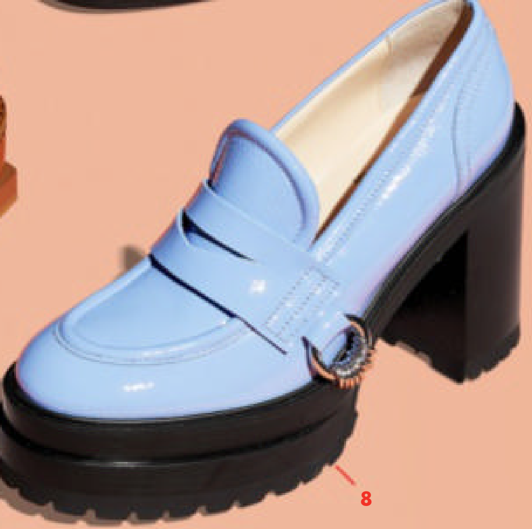
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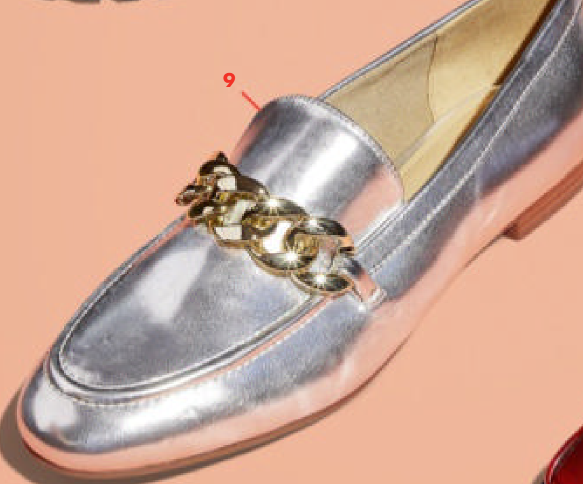
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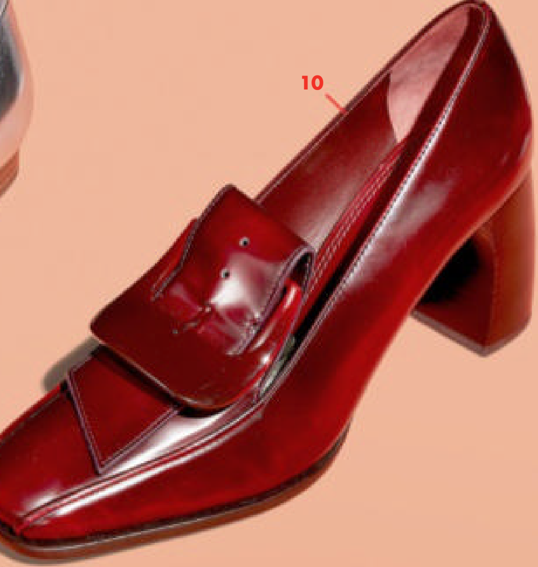
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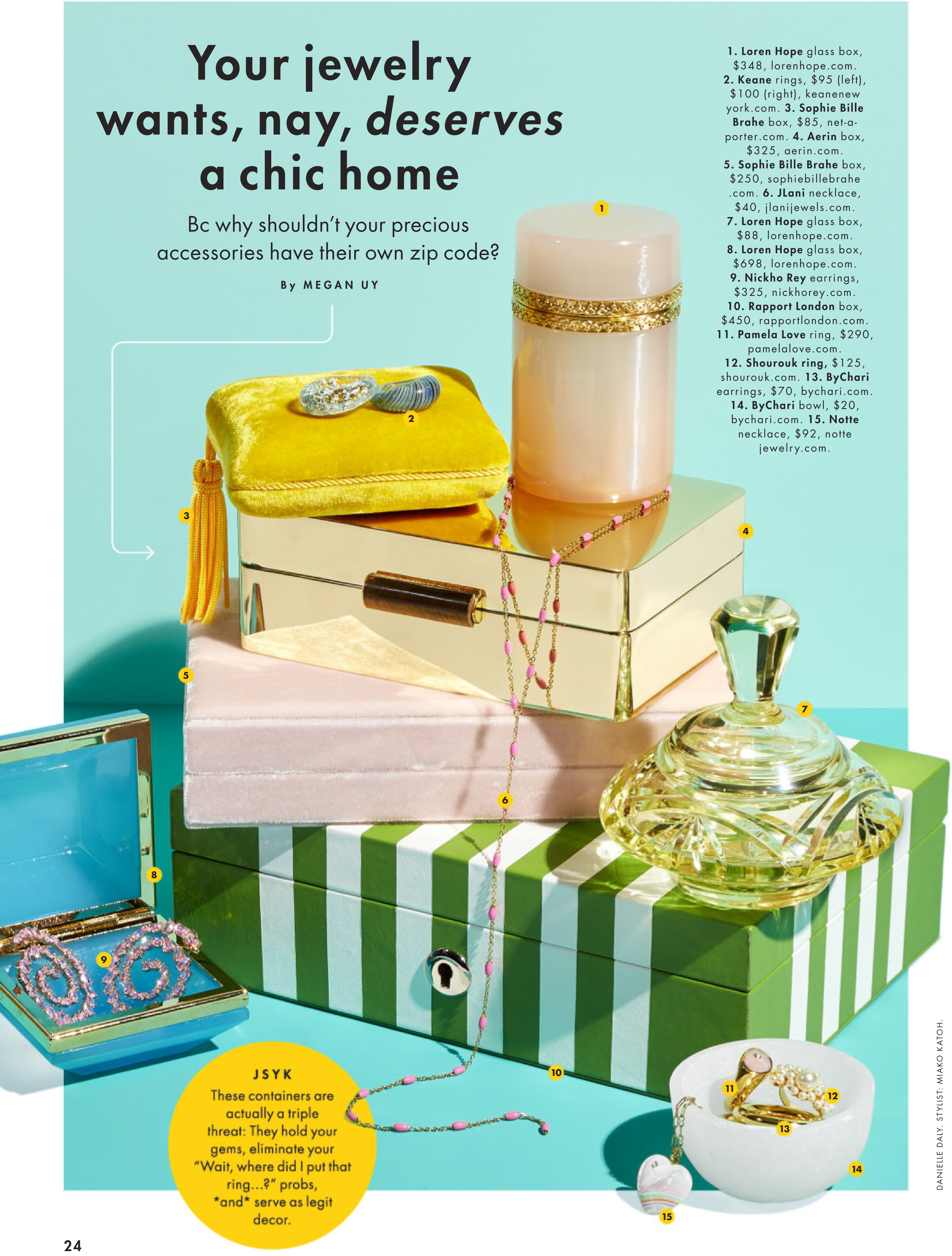
1. **G.H. Bass & Co.**, $120, ghbass.com. 2. **Sarah Flint**, $415, sarahflint.com. 3. **Marc Fisher LTD**, $170, marcfisherfootwear.com. 4. **Stuart Weitzman**, $450, stuartweitzman.com. 5. **ATP Atelier**, $595, atpatelier.com. 6. **Aerosoles Aware x Laura Ashley**, $120, aerosoles.com. 7. **Chelsea Paris**, $350, chelseaparis.com. 8. **AGL**, $690, agl.com. 9. **Nine West**, $85, ninewest.com. 10. **Tory Burch**, $398, toryburch.com.

DANIELLE DALY. FASHION STYLIST: MIAKO KATOH.

# Your jewelry wants, nay, *deserves* a chic home

Bc why shouldn't your precious accessories have their own zip code?

By MEGAN UY



1. **Loren Hope** glass box, $348, lorenhope.com. 2. **Keane** rings, $95 (left), $100 (right), keanenewyork.com. 3. **Sophie Bille Brahe** box, $85, net-a-porter.com. 4. **Aerin** box, $325, aerin.com. 5. **Sophie Bille Brahe** box, $250, sophiebillebrahe.com. 6. **JLani** necklace, $40, jlanijewels.com. 7. **Loren Hope** glass box, $88, lorenhope.com. 8. **Loren Hope** glass box, $698, lorenhope.com. 9. **Nickho Rey** earrings, $325, nickhorey.com. 10. **Rapport London** box, $450, rapportlondon.com. 11. **Pamela Love** ring, $290, pamelalove.com. 12. **Shourouk ring,** $125, shourouk.com. 13. **ByChari** earrings, $70, bychari.com. 14. **ByChari** bowl, $20, bychari.com. 15. **Notte** necklace, $92, nottejewelry.com.

**JSYK**

These containers are actually a triple threat: They hold your gems, eliminate your "Wait, where did I put that ring…?" probs, *and* serve as legit decor.

DANIELLE DALY. STYLIST: MIAKO KATOH.

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**48h** protection

# Just a list of REASONS YOUR LIFE ISN'T COMPLETE WITHOUT A LIP STAIN

By SAMI ROBERTS

Go ahead, start plotting your color combos now.

1. You'll no longer need three products, tissues, and a Q-tip to create that cool-girl, lived-in lip vibe.
2. One swipe will last through coffee, infinite meetings, the birth of your first child, and probs their graduation too.
3. Frantically checking your face in every semi-reflective surface for smears or smudges: not a thing.
4. Also not a thing: those kinda gross lipstick marks on the rim of your water bottle.
5. Rogue strands of hair can flutter all they want and not even once get stuck to your mouth.
6. It's pretty much the only way to slay a color-blocked lip (just peep this here photo).
7. Your next dance-floor make-out will be *sooo* much less messy. You're welcome.

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The delicious fragrance duo by
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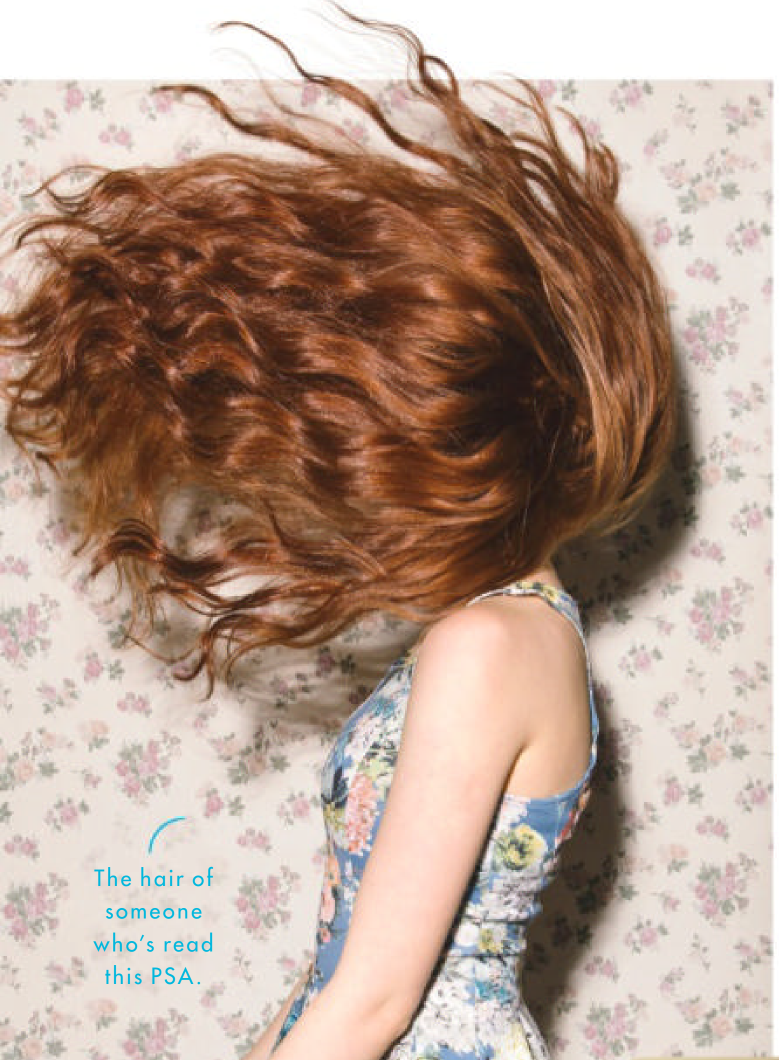
# Uh, your anti-breakage hair products *might* be making damage worse

Buckle up, buttercup—this is gonna melt your brain.

By CHLOE METZGER



The hair of someone who's read this PSA.

Once upon a time, I completely and utterly fucked up my hair. In an innocent attempt to fix my curls after some intense heat styling, I began slathering them in every anti-breakage treatment I could find. Cut to me two months later, dealing with hair so crispy that I had to enlist the help of experts (while crying, ofc), who informed me that the very products I'd been pouring my hopes/dreams/money into were actually adding fuel to my damage fire.

Yes, thank you, it *was* a lot. But now that I'm safely on the other side—curls a-bouncin' again—I'm here to help you avoid making the same mistake.

### What "anti-breakage" really means

If a hair product touts any tough-stuff lingo ("Fixes!" "Restores!" "Repairs!"), it's likely packed with proteins, which help strengthen damaged hair by filling in holes along the cuticle. Sounds great—and it is great!—unless you're unaware that...

### Protein overload = more breakage

When you use these products 24/7, the protein quickly builds up and dries out your hair. "If you stretch a strand of dry hair and it snaps immediately, you've got too much protein," says BosleyMD trichologist Gretchen Friese. That's exactly what happened to me—I'd unknowingly turned my hair (and soul) into a fragile shell instead of reaching for the real key: hydration. "People think they need protein to fix their issues, when they usually need more moisture," explains trichologist Audrey Sivasothy. (Think: you chugging a third iced coffee when your body is really begging for water.)

### The easy-ish fix

Rinse with a clarifying shampoo twice a month to strip the protein buildup, swap your products for moisture-rich formulas, and limit your protein treatments to just twice monthly. It'll take time to restore ~the balance~, but after a month or two, your hair will return to its soft and shiny state—and, like me, you'll be off spreading the good-hair gospel to all your friends.

## A HEALTHY-HAIR STARTER PACK

PANTENE
MIRACLE Rescue
DEEP CONDITIONING TREATMENT
237 mL (8.0 FL OZ)
Anomaly
CLARIFYING SHAMPOO
11 FL OZ / 325 mL
DevaCurl
MELT INTO MOISTURE
SheaMoisture
MANUKA HONEY & YOGURT
HYDRATE + REPAIR PROTEIN POWER TREATMENT

Your *only* protein!

**CLARIFIER:** **Anomaly** Clarifying Shampoo, $6, target.com. **CONDITIONER:** **Pantene** Miracle Rescue Deep Conditioning Treatment, $7, drugstores. **MASK:** **DevaCurl** Melt Into Moisture Mask, $36, devacurl.com. **PROTEIN TREATMENT:** **SheaMoisture** Manuka Honey & Yogurt Hydrate + Repair Protein Power Treatment, $12, target.com.

DANIL NEVSKY.

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## DUCHESS' UNCLE GARY:

# 'Harry's being self-indulgent – but Kate is trying to make peace'

As the fallout with Harry and Meghan deepens, The Duchess of Cambridge's uncle, Gary Goldsmith (left), tells Closer she is the key to healing their rift with the royal family

Meghan and Kate at Wimbledon in 2019

It's been bombshell after bombshell from Prince Harry as he continues to blast members of the royal family in his apparent war against the Palace.

In his latest scathing comments, he criticised his dad, Prince Charles, for not doing enough to prevent him and Prince William from suffering following the death of their mother, Princess Diana, and accused the family of "total neglect" when his wife Meghan Markle struggled with her mental health.

The Queen – recently widowed after the death of Prince Philip in April – is said to be feeling "upset" and "blindsided" by the confessions in Harry's new Apple TV docuseries, *The Me You Can't See*, which he produced with Oprah Winfrey.

Prince William, 39, and wife Kate, 40, have also been in the Sussex's firing line, following the couple's infamous interview with Oprah in February, with Harry, 36, describing William as being "trapped" and Meghan, 39, saying Kate made her cry.

With public support for the former royal couple appearing to be waning, Kate's uncle, Gary Goldsmith, now tells *Closer* that while the outbursts have been upsetting, he believes Kate is the key to fixing the fractured relationship.

### HURTFUL

Recruitment consultant Gary, 56, who is the younger brother of Kate's mother, Carole Middleton, says, "I went from being happy [about Harry taking the decision to seek a more "private life"] to angry, to worried about him.

"Everyone is astonished. He wanted to step back and protect his wife, now he's charging in. It's an attack on the family – why do it? If you want an easy life, work it out privately and have a conversation respectfully. Don't air it in public, it's really hurtful.

"The harsh truth – in my opinion – is that if Harry doesn't get a grip and stop this self-indulgent episode, there will soon be no common ground or relationship to rebuild.

"But if anyone can bring peace to the royals, Kate can. Kate is a brilliant arbiter and peacemaker. Every bone in her body is about making friends and doing the best she can... She's trying to mediate."

> 'IF HE DOESN'T GET A GRIP, THERE WILL SOON BE NO RELATIONSHIP TO REBUILD'

The Queen is said to be "upset" at Harry's revelations

William, Harry, Meghan and Kate were dubbed "The Fab Four"

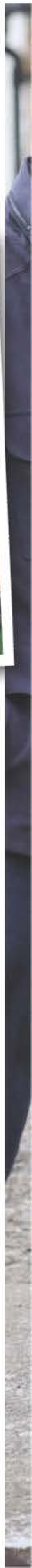
Gary tells *Closer* that despite Harry's attacks on the monarchy – including claims of racism and not helping with mental health problems – he believes the royals won't be "damaged" by it.

He says, "I've never been more proud of the royal family. They give us a sense of stability and they've kept their dignity. Everyone loves our Queen and I think, with everything going on in the world at the moment, the royals are as important today as ever for our nation. This won't be damaging to them at all."

### TENSIONS

When Meghan was introduced into the fold in 2017, Kate is said to have welcomed her and, with their husbands, they were famously dubbed "The Fab Four".

Then, with tensions reportedly rising between William and Harry, Kate took Meghan to Wimbledon in 2019 to show solidarity. And in April, she acted as peacemaker again at Prince Philip's funeral, when she was seen moving away to give Harry and William space



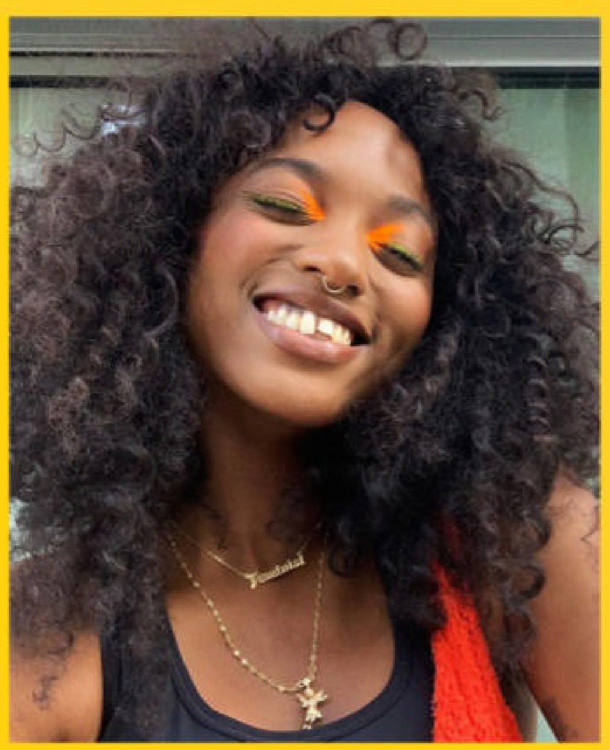
# The fall makeup guide your face needs right now

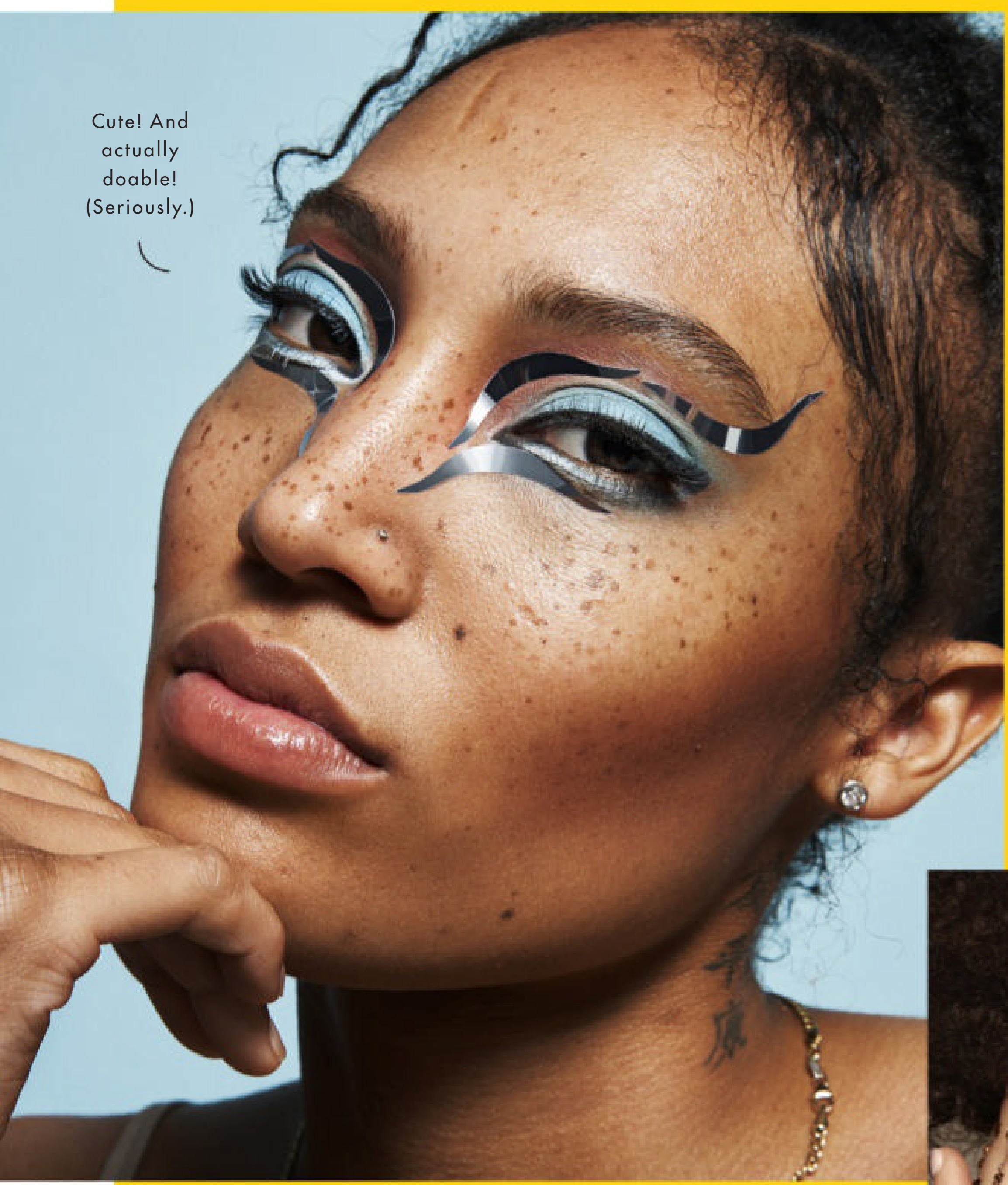
DIY one of these for your next night out (or in—whatever, you're the boss).

By LAUREN BALSAMO

## Inner corner art

Neon orange and lime: Yes, def. But any pairing of bright powder eyeshadows (purple and blue, pink and red, etc., etc.) is very fun. Use a shadow brush to tap one color into your inner eye corners in a sideways V shape. Next, trace another color along your upper lash lines.





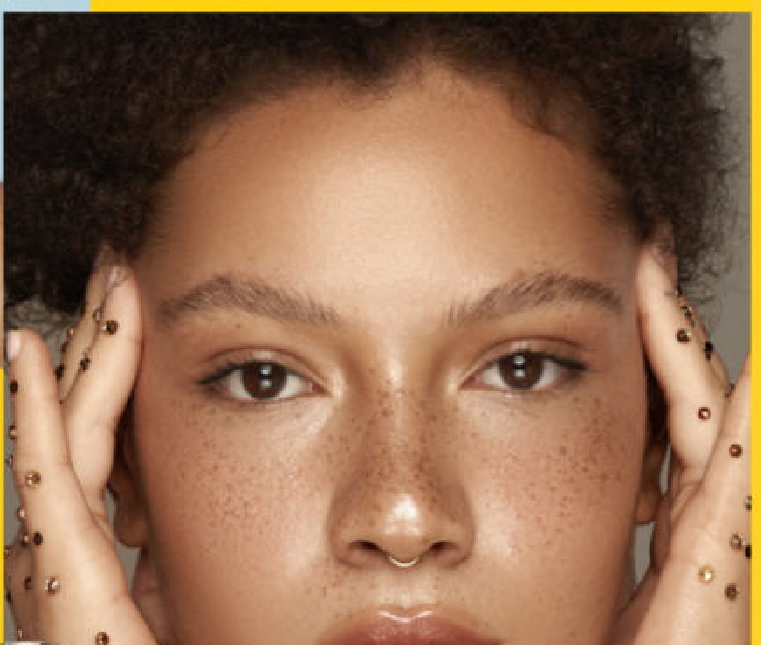
Cute! And actually doable! (Seriously.)

## Eye stickers

Dramatic ~art~ looks great on the 'gram but is kinda impossible to do IRL...which is why these are so damn clutch (the ones in this pic are from Face Lace). Do your makeup as usual, then use tweezers to peel the backing off the stickers and place them around your eyes. *Sooo* easy.

## Ultra-dewy skin

Put away your mattifiers, bc "glazed doughnut" is *the* skin aesthetic for 2021. Mix equal parts liquid highlighter and liquid foundation to get a glowy base, and tap Danessa Myricks shimmery face gloss on top.



**Danessa Myricks Beauty** Dew Wet Balm in Morning Dew, $22, sephora.com

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: @KLARICHALL BY MATTHEW SHAVE; @FRIDACASHFLOW, MAKEUP BY @YASMINIST; @MOSEIIMOSE BY DANESSA MYRICKS USING DANESSA MYRICKS BEAUTY.

# *What if Cinderella absolutely hated Prince Charming?*

"I can't believe we got invited to Sebastian's party," Marissa sighed dreamily to her twin sister. "He's the most gorgeous guy, like, ever."

"Sebastian Phillips?" I spluttered. "As in the kid who got me expelled from school?"

"That's the one!" Vanessa chirped.

I couldn't help but stare at the twins in disbelief. "And you want me to go to his party?"

"It's supposed to be the party of the century!" Marissa said. "I mean, come on, the guy is hot, rich, and charr You'd have to be o f yo t to go."
Van ot you
hav
wer

"A l

*"Back for a reread, I love it so much."*

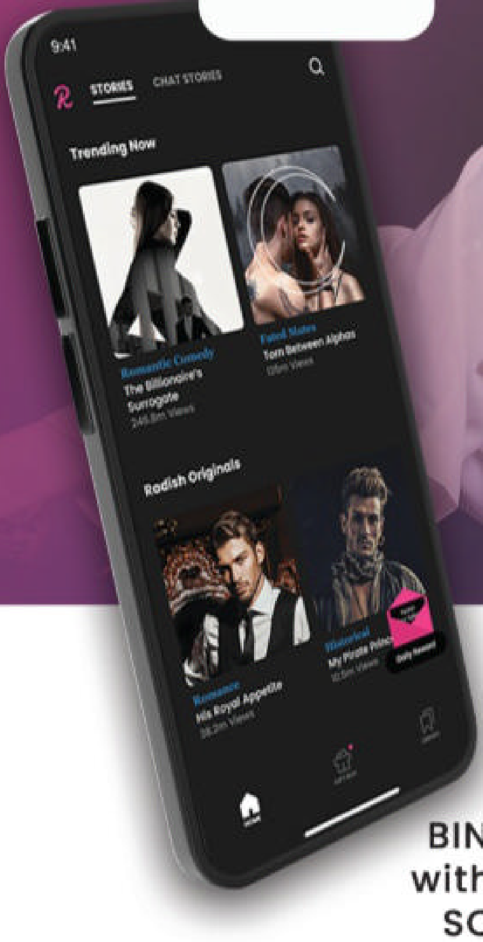
*"Let the sparks fly!"*

*"Lust at first sight..."*

*"LOL. My jaw was on the floor. Oh, this is so good."*

once upon a

## One Night Mistake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STORIES
CHAT STORIES
Trending Now
Romantic Comedy
The Billionaire's Surrogate
Fated Mates
Torn Between Alphas
Radish Originals
Romance
His Royal Appetite
Historical
My Pirate Prince

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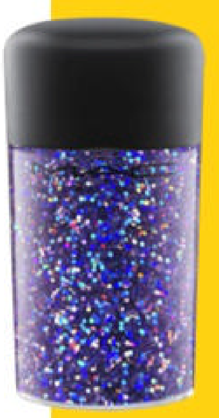
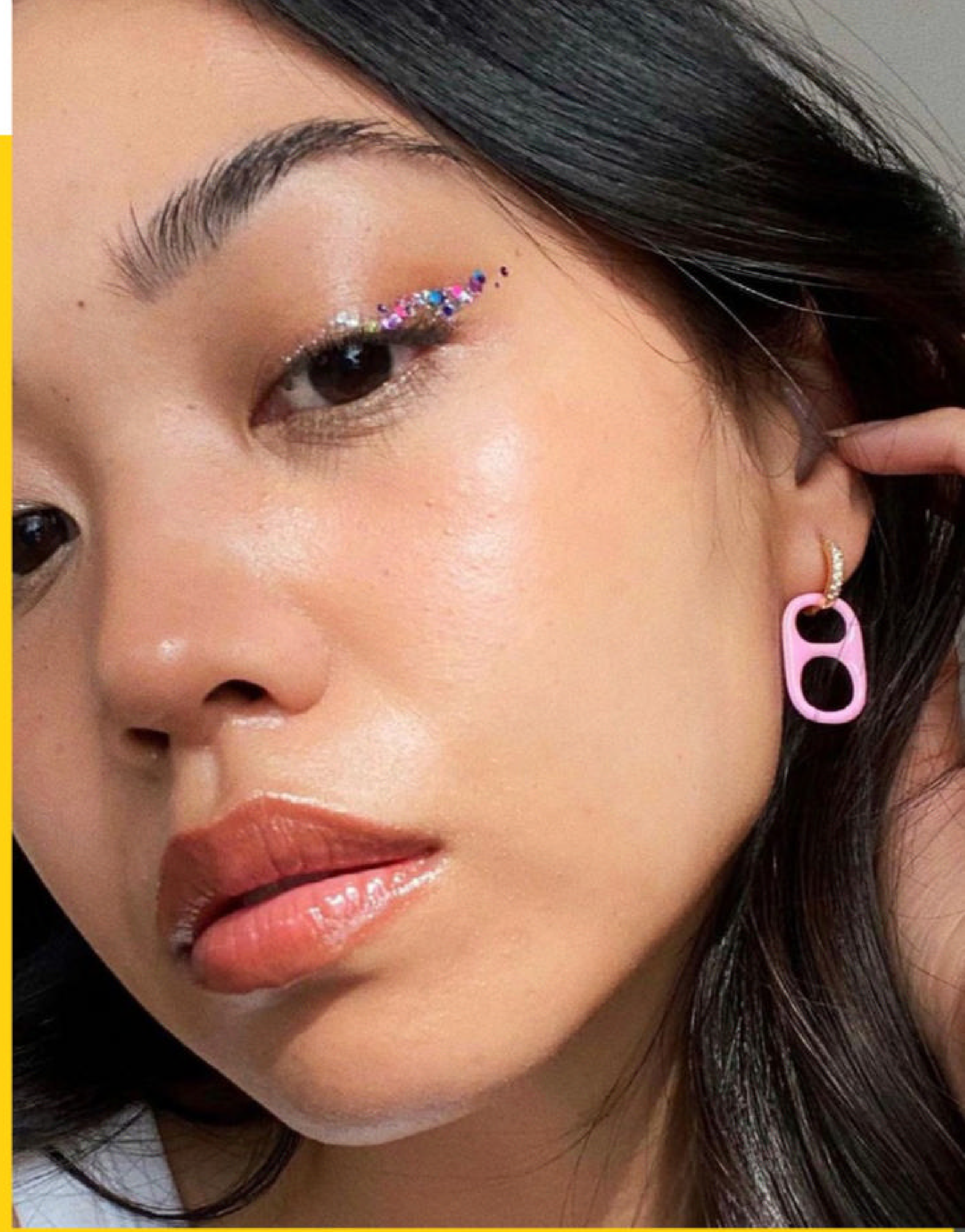
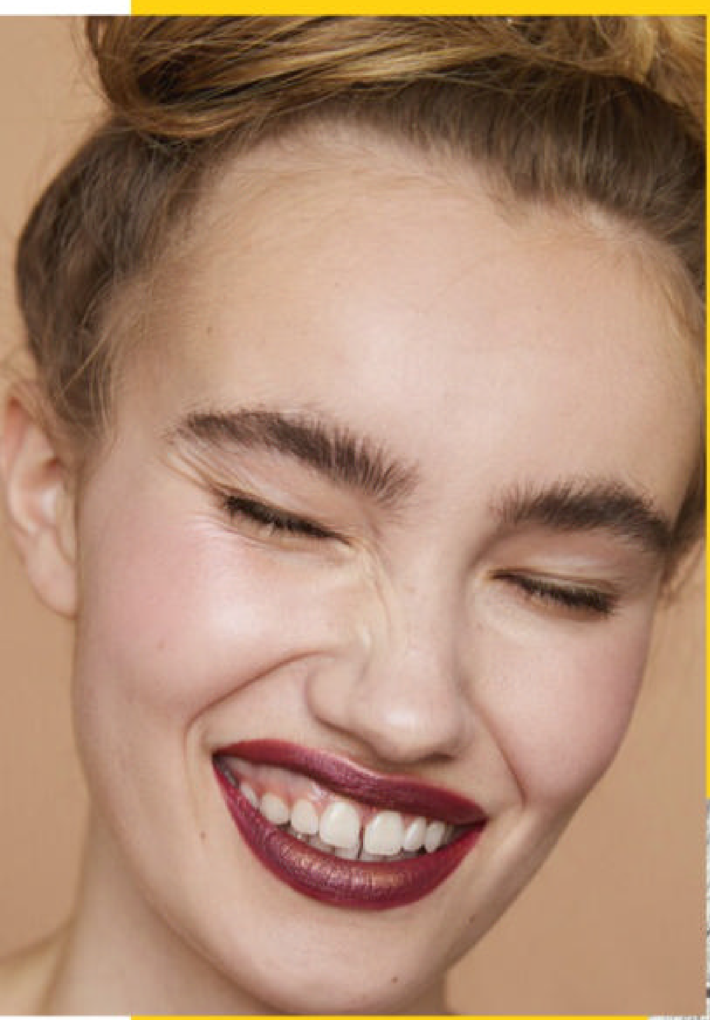


**MAC Cosmetics** Glitter in Purple Hologram, $23, maccosmetics.com

## Glitter wings

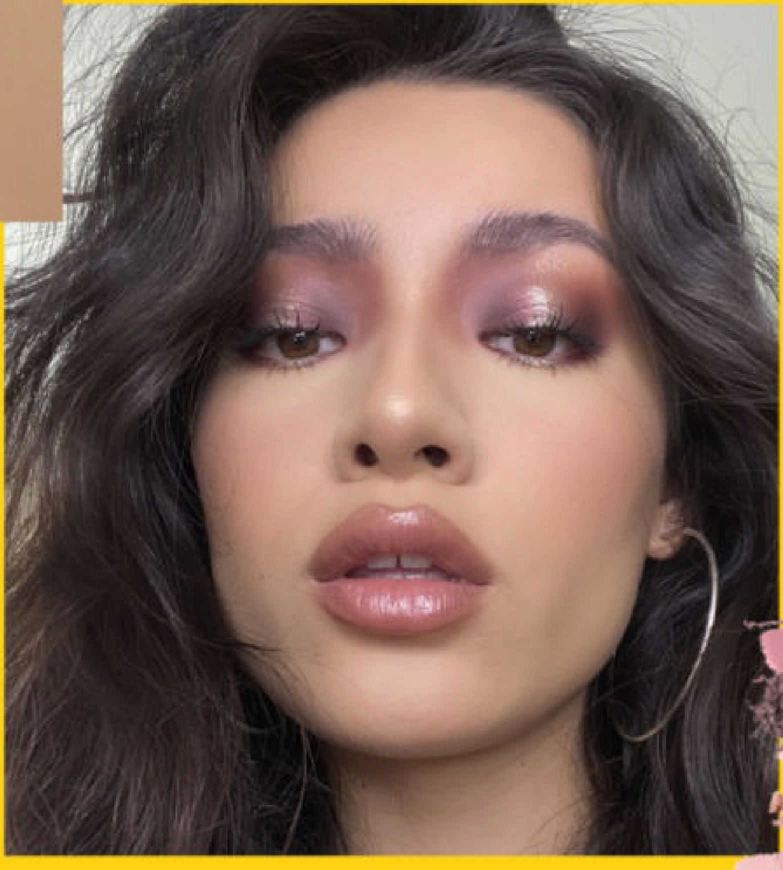
Step up your cat-eye game and use cosmetic glue (there are a bunch of different kinds on Amazon, but we like Anastasia Beverly Hills Glitter Adhesive, $18) to create your wing shape before using your fingers to tap loose glitter right on top.





## Glam lips

Be the dramatic-in-a-good-way friend in your group chat by making this your fall signature. Exfoliate your lips first, then go in with a layer of deep-red matte color (like Sephora Collection Cream Lip Stain Liquid Lipstick in Black Cherry, $15). Before it sets, tap a tiny bit of gold sparkle on your Cupid's bow and the center of your bottom lip.

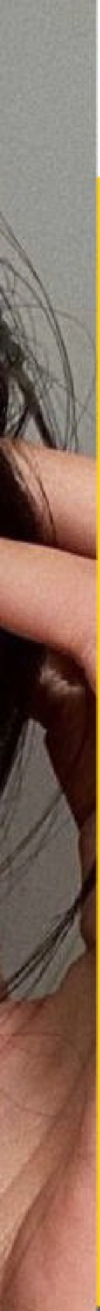


## A soft pink glow

It's your regular going-out look (as in, smoky eyes and a glossy lip), but your color palette is now soft, hazy pinks. For your eyes, use the matte shadows in the palette below to create a base, then tap the shimmery shades on top. Swipe a little blush on your cheeks, and add a pinkish-brown gloss to your lips.

**Maybelline New York** The City Kits All-in-One Eye & Cheek Palette in Pink Edge, $12, amazon.com

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: LUCY KINNEN; @OVERGLOWEDIT; @YASMINIST. OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: @SOSODOESMAKEUP; @EVARANKIN BY NIKKI WOLF; @ISABELLEIKPEME.



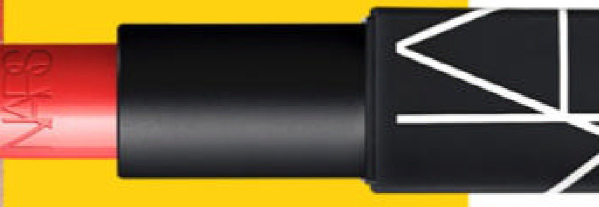
Also, wait, can we talk about these earrings?!

## Matching liner and lashes

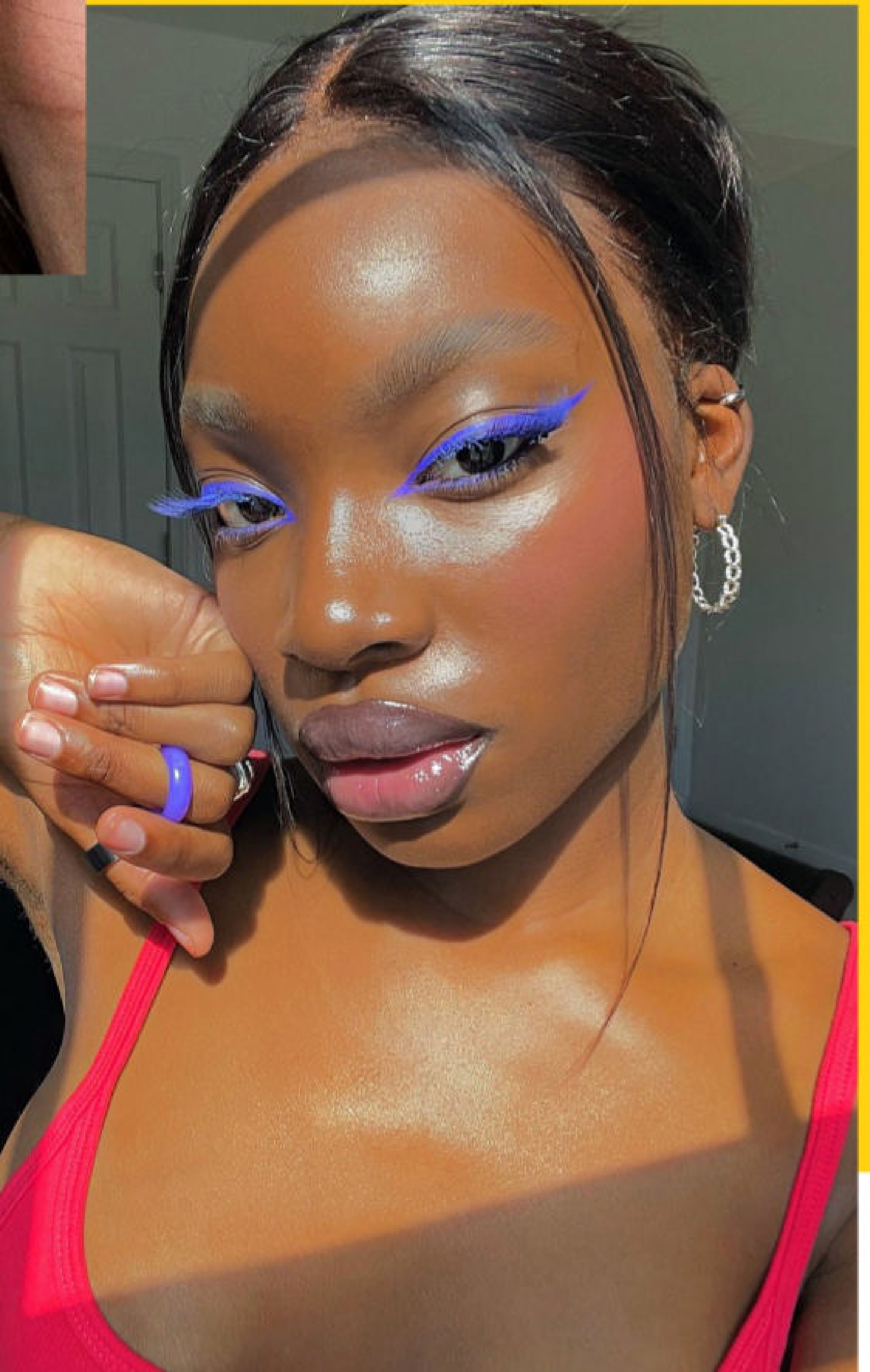
Colorful liner and lashes are a vibe on their own, but wear 'em together in a matching shade and it's a whole freaking mood. The trick for making the pigments pop and stay put throughout the day? Priming your lids and lashes before applying any color.

## Orange lips

This juicy, melty, Popsicle-inspired (yes, another food reference, sry!) look does the most without you actually having to do a whole lot. Just swipe a sheer peachy-orange shade on clean lips and… you're done.



**Nars Cosmetics** Lipstick in Start Your Engines, $26, narscosmetics.com



## Warm neutrals

Low-key? Sure. Boring or basic? Absolutely not. Sweep a matte shadow that's a few shades deeper than your skin tone on your lids all the way to the outer corners of your brows and down along your lower lash lines. Add a matching lip (go with a formula that's opaque and creamy, like Patrick Ta Monochrome Moment Silky Lip Crème, $24), *et voilà*!

# This is your skin on ACID

Navigating the good, the bad, and the confusing.

By LAUREN BALSAMO

SERGEY FILIMONOV/STOCKSY.

**Hi, would you mind grabbing your skincare stash? I'll wait.** Now take a look at the labels. You're probs seeing a ton of words that end in "-ic" (glycolic, hyaluronic, ferulic, linoleic), and yes, good guess, all those words essentially mean "acid." But each type serves a very different purpose—some brighten, others hydrate, some even strengthen your skin barrier. We're here today to talk about the exfoliating kind, which is, when used properly, a literal glow-inducing dream, and when not used properly, an actual nightmare. So really, it's best that you pay close attention....

## THE THREE MAIN TYPES OF EXFOLIATING ACIDS

### 1. AHAs (alpha hydroxy acids)

These tackle everything from fine lines to dark spots by exfoliating the top layer of your skin, says dermatologist Elyse Love, MD. There are a bunch of AHAs out there; these are the five that should be on your radar.

#### GLYCOLIC ACID

Its molecules are teeny-tiny, allowing it to easily penetrate. Translation: It can really get in there to loosen the glue that holds dead skin cells together, minimize the look of pores, smooth fine lines, and fade hyperpigmentation. (P.S. It can also separately boost collagen production.)

**LACTIC ACID**
A bit gentler than glycolic with some hydrating abilities, this is a great option for dry skin types. And it's a go-to for smoothing rough, uneven texture.

**TARTARIC ACID**
Its larger molecules = good for sensitive skin. Also cool? Antioxidant properties that can help protect against the damaging effects of pollution and blue light.

**MANDELIC ACID**
Another solid option for sensitive types, it penetrates skin slowly to minimize irritation. Its powers include fading discoloration (like acne marks and melasma) and having antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties.

**MALIC ACID**
A great supporting ingredient that plays nice with other acids, it exfoliates gently while drawing moisture to your skin.

### 2. BHAs (beta hydroxy acids)

The big one here is salicylic acid, says Dr. Love. It's a great exfoliator and also exceptionally good at dissolving stubborn oil and other buildup in pores, making it a gem for treating breakouts. It can even help curb oil production and reduce inflammation, which is why you see it in just about every acne product ever.

### 3. PHAs (poly-hydroxy acids)

Aka the gentlest of them all. "PHAs are great for those who want the brightening and smoothing effects of an AHA but haven't been able to tolerate one," explains Dr. Love. They can be used as a daily exfoliator and can help boost the effectiveness of other skincare ingredients too.

## AND THE BEST ONES TO USE AT HOME

skinfix
acne
L'ORÉAL
REVITALIFT
5% PURE GLYCOLIC ACID PEELING TONER
peach slices
ACNE
OIL-FREE MOISTURIZER
OLEHENRIKSEN
Dewtopia 20% Acid Night Treatment
RENÉE ROULEAU
TRIPLE BERRY SMOOTHING PEEL

Just because you can find acids in everything from face washes to moisturizers doesn't mean you should add them to every step of your routine, says Dr. Love. "Pick *one* acid-based product—overdoing it will destroy your skin barrier and cause inflammation, redness, and flakiness—and keep the rest of your routine nice and simple."

**CLEANSER**

**Skinfix** Acne+ Azelaic Acid AHA/BHA Cleanser, $35, sephora.com

Ideal for treating and preventing acne, thanks to a blend of salicylic, glycolic, and azelaic acids (that last one is a v mild exfoliant that's also antibacterial and anti-inflammatory).

**TONER**

**L'Oréal Paris** Revitalift Derm Intensives 5% Glycolic Acid Toner, $20, drugstores

Made with a combo of 5 percent glycolic acid and aloe vera, this toner exfoliates, clarifies, *and* moisturizes skin.

**SERUM**

**OleHenriksen** Dewtopia 20% Acid Night Treatment, $55, sephora.com

Apply a few drops to clean skin before bed and let the AHAs and PHAs work their brightening and line-smoothing magic while you sleep.

**MOISTURIZER**

**Peach Slices** Acne Oil-Free Moisturizer, $13, ulta.com

The hydrating hyaluronic acid (a humectant, not an exfoliator) and 0.5 percent salicylic acid in this lotion keep pores clear and skin breakout-free.

**MASK**

**Renée Rouleau** Triple Berry Smoothing Peel, $88.50, reneerouleau.com

Salicylic acid and AHAs (mandelic, lactic, tartaric, and malic acids) in this rinse-off mask visibly smooth, soften, and brighten skin. It's basically a facial in a jar.

## HOW TO AVOID AN ACID BURN

✖✖
**Don't go all out**
Acids come in varying percentages, but you don't want to reach for the strongest one right off the bat. "Start low and slow, then work your way up to a higher concentration," says Dr. Love.

✖✖
**Don't skip SPF**
This stuff can make your skin photosensitive, or more prone to sunburn and UV damage, so don't forget to apply and reapply an SPF 30 or higher as the last step in your daily routine.

✓
**Do try short-contact acids**
Opting for an acid product that stays on your skin for just a few minutes and is then rinsed off (like a cleanser or toner) is an easy way to minimize potential irritation if you have sensitive skin.

# COSMO'S GUIDE TO CHANGING THE WORLD

Who says you can't do big sh*t? Just start here.

**OVER THE PAST YEAR,** our nation has been shaken by crises: a pandemic, systemic racism, health care inequality, reproductive rights restrictions, climate change. It's been a lot—yet it did not defeat us.

That's because Americans from all walks of life stepped up, marching for justice, supporting friends and neighbors in need, and—when it mattered more than ever—making sure all voices were heard during the 2020 election.

Along with countless volunteers and dedicated activists, I'm proud to be a big part of that last effort. My team and I—via my organization, Fair Fight—worked harder than ever to ensure every eligible voter got the chance to cast a ballot. In the end, our push against voter suppression led to major change and historic levels of voter turnout, and that feels incredibly encouraging.

But you don't need to launch a nonprofit, quit your day job, or even spend much money to make an impact. By offering up small donations, a little time, and their votes, so many people just like you harnessed their passions to make progress over the past year—proving no donation or action is too small.

We all have a role to play in our communities, and within each of us lies the capacity to create change for ourselves and others. So find a local organization, campaign, or issue that speaks to you and get in the arena to make our world better for generations to come. You can do it!

—STACEY ABRAMS

**STACEY ABRAMS,** FOUNDER OF FAIR FIGHT ACTION, WHICH SHE LAUNCHED AFTER LONG LINES AND RESTRICTIONS KEPT VOTERS FROM THE POLLS DURING HER RUN FOR GEORGIA GOVERNOR IN 2018

GETTY IMAGES (2).

## PART 1

# FIND YOUR MISSION

If you're out here like, "Cool! Now what?" here's how to pinpoint the cause that speaks to you.

By ANDREA GONZÁLEZ-RAMÍREZ

**STEP 1**

### Make a list of the things that keep you up at night.

In the words of Vice President Kamala Harris: What is your 3 a.m. agenda? Maybe it's the wave of anti-transgender legislation or the climate crisis or youth homelessness. Maybe it's all of them! Write down every damn thing because your intuition is a powerful tool. "Five years ago, my plan for my life and my business looked nothing like my current reality," says Joy Harden Bradford, PhD, creator of Therapy for Black Girls. "But in paying attention to the thing that was calling me, I've stumbled into a career that is incredibly fulfilling and that allows me to be of service to thousands of Black women and girls across the world." Even if you're not looking to dedicate your life to this, passion will make you more effective.

**JOY HARDEN BRADFORD, PHD,** CREATOR OF THERAPY FOR BLACK GIRLS

**STEP 2**

### Seek out who's already on it.

Put those social and interwebs creeping skills to good use by sleuthing out which orgs are actually doing something about the stuff that worries you, focusing on groups near you. Bc while local nonprofits, even small ones, can have a BIG impact on your community, they have fewer resources than national groups—so you'll get more

# WHAT IS YOUR 3A.M. AGENDA?

**ALICIA GARZA,** PRINCIPAL AT BLACK FUTURES LAB AND COFOUNDER OF THE BLACK LIVES MATTER GLOBAL NETWORK

good-doing bang for your buck (or time) with them. A simple Google search like "climate change groups near me" gets that started.

If you've narrowed it down to a few, look into which have been around the longest. Those likely have a grip on, say, the niche environmental issues facing your hometown and the best ways to make an impact. Maybe they helped pass local legislation or organized coat donations during the holidays, for example. Getting these receipts can help you make a solid match.

**STEP 3**

## Look into what groups need.

Digging up ~how~ these activist groups do what they do is vital to finding your philanthropic home. Do they meet weekly to clean up a highway? Do they participate in marches? Do they fund programs that help kids afford school lunch? Do they have *paid* job openings? Be real and picture yourself doing those things and think about whether they vibe with your schedule and budget. If a crew requires more than you can give, it's fine! Just keep looking.

**STEP 4**

## Consider your natural talents.

If you're never not schooling your friends on grammar, you might be the perfect person to write an org's newsletter. Or maybe you work in the hospitality biz and a local shelter needs someone like your beautiful self to serve meals. Sure, you don't have to "be good at" the thing you're volunteering to do, but taking skills you already have into account can help you filter through *alllll* the opportunities out there.

**STEP 5**

## Set realistic expectations.

Once you've picked a group, remember that you don't need to perform a grand gesture like starting your own chapter to make a difference. Spending a few hours a month canvassing or phone banking to get people to join your cause or open their wallets makes an impact, says Alicia Garza, principal at Black Futures Lab and cofounder of the Black Lives Matter Global Network. And if you want to give money, you don't need a ton of disposable income either. Even donating $5 a month helps.

## HELP! I STILL CAN'T DECIDE!

🤔 If you're torn between causes, contact each one and ask what the most effective way to help is. Anything sound perfect? Great. If it *all* sounds perfect and you just can't narrow it down, create a v realistic schedule for doing a bit of everything. Maybe that means promoting a group on social media twice a month, volunteering in person at a diff place once a month, and donating money to a third org once a year. And remember, you can switch up your sched whenever.

## ORGS THAT COULD USE YOUR LOVE

💵 | Needs money

❤ | Needs volunteers

**National Network of Abortion Funds** works to help patients nationwide access abortion care.

💵

**Pacific Environment** partners with local environmental leaders along the Pacific Rim to help protect all the creatures that live there.

💵

**Black Voters Matter** defends voting rights across the country and encourages Black voter registration and turnout in local and national elections.

💵❤

**No Kid Hungry** funds free meals for kids at school and in their communities.

💵❤

**The Trevor Project** runs a 24/7 national suicide prevention hotline, a text line, and a social networking platform for LGBTQ+ youth.

💵❤

## MY WHY

**JAMIE MARGOLIN,** COFOUNDER OF ZERO HOUR

"I can't remember a time when climate change wasn't on my mind. But when I was 14, I grew more and more concerned that the country wasn't doing enough to keep the crisis at bay. I believed—and still do—it is a matter of life and death."

**CRISTINA JIMÉNEZ MORETA,** COFOUNDER OF UNITED WE DREAM

"When I was in college, U.S. Border Patrol agents detained my friend and classmate (now my life partner), Walter, and threatened to deport him. That's when I knew, especially as an unauthorized immigrant myself, I had to do something to improve the rights of young people in the same position as us."

**RENEE BRACEY SHERMAN,** FOUNDER OF WE TESTIFY

"Although I never regretted my decision to get an abortion, it still makes me sad to think about how lonely I was waiting for my procedure without a loved one in the clinic. No one should feel as alone as I did that day."

## PEOPLE DOING GOOD

**800+**

The number of mutual aid groups (aka local volunteer groups that support their neighborhoods) in the U.S. Find one at MutualAidHub.org.

**$471 BILLION**

The record-setting amount donated to charitable orgs last year—and most of it came from folks like you, not corporations.

**1 IN 3**

The number of people in 2020 who used social media to support a cause, find a protest, and/or encourage others to act.

**$2,500**

The average amount U.S. households donate to charity every year.

SOURCES: THE *NEW YORK TIMES* CIVIS ANALYTICS, GIVING USA 2021 REPORT, PEW RESEARCH CENTER, NATIONAL PHILANTHROPIC TRUST

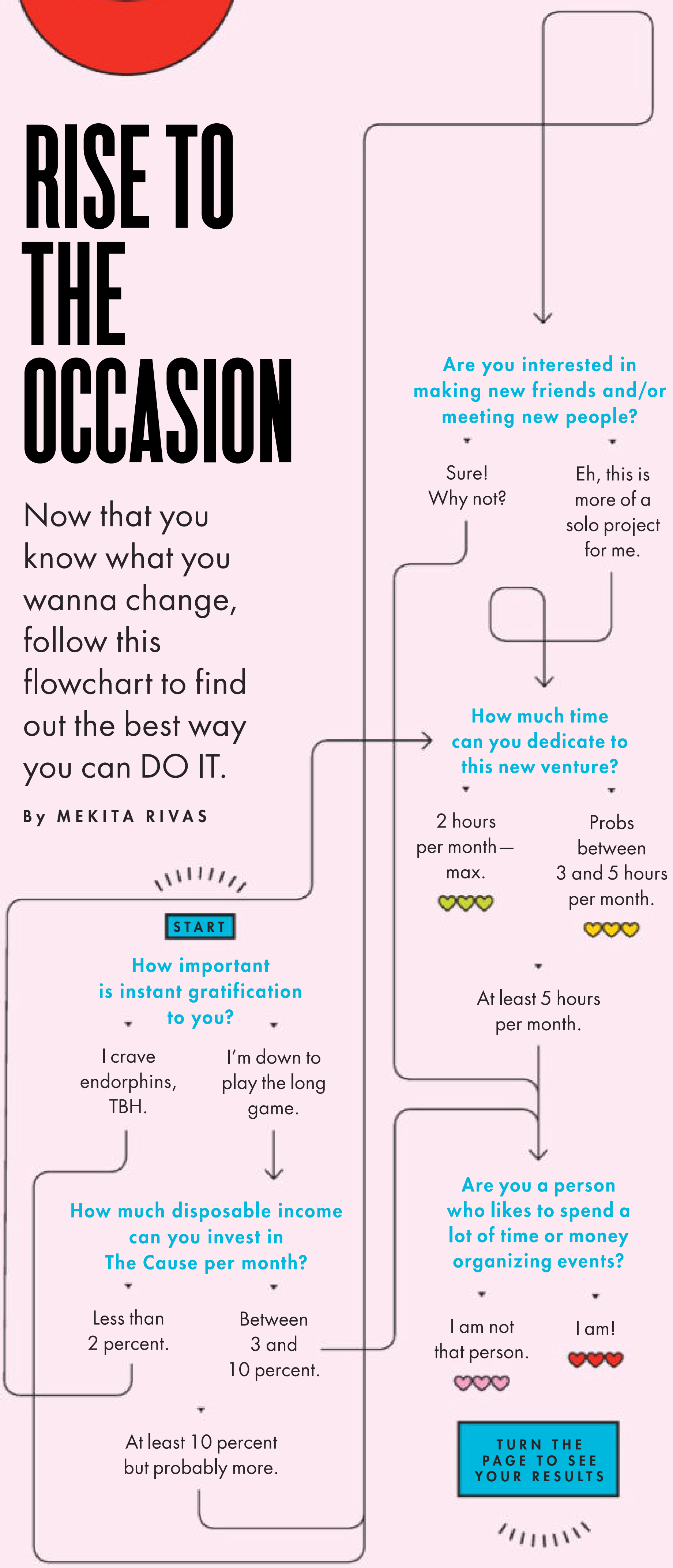
GETTY IMAGES (3). SHERMAN: BLACKHOUSE FOUNDATION.

PART 2

# RISE TO THE OCCASION

Now that you know what you wanna change, follow this flowchart to find out the best way you can DO IT.

By MEKITA RIVAS



START

**How important is instant gratification to you?**

I crave endorphins, TBH.

I'm down to play the long game.

**How much disposable income can you invest in The Cause per month?**

Less than 2 percent.

Between 3 and 10 percent.

At least 10 percent but probably more.

**Are you interested in making new friends and/or meeting new people?**

Sure! Why not?

Eh, this is more of a solo project for me.

**How much time can you dedicate to this new venture?**

2 hours per month—max. 💚💚💚

Probs between 3 and 5 hours per month. 💛💛💛

At least 5 hours per month.

**Are you a person who likes to spend a lot of time or money organizing events?**

I am not that person. 🩷🩷🩷

I am! ❤️❤️❤️

TURN THE PAGE TO SEE YOUR RESULTS

# YOUR MISSION ISN'T SET IN STONE

## RESULTS

### 1. VOLUNTEER WHEN YOU CAN, DONATE WHEN YOU CAN'T

You can still be a solid activist with a smol budget or messy schedule. Join an org that has volunteer ops at least once a month and get in on those. When you're slammed at work or just exhausted from being a person in 2021, donate your regularly scheduled take-out money and pat yourself on the back for fighting the good fight. Whatever you can contribute is enough, says Congresswoman Ilhan Omar: "Everyone's capacity is going to look a little different."

**ILHAN OMAR,**
CONGRESSWOMAN FROM MINNESOTA

### 2. PLAN A THING

Changing the world needs planners like you to help get shit done. Organize a drive that brings in stuff like food, clothing, or whatever your cause needs rn. If you're a people person, invite friends or group members to help. Not you? No shame in doing a small-scale version of the thing solo.

### 3. VOLUNTEER REMOTELY

The internet is here to help you help the world without putting on pants or seeing other humans. Spend an hour or so per week working for your cause by creating social posts to spread awareness about your issue (move your eyes to the right), writing thank-you letters to donors, contacting lawmakers, or doing any other virtual work your organization needs to get done. Introverts are activists too, k?

### 4. PUT YOUR MONEY TO WORK

Look, there's nothing wrong with using your cash to make change—and you can do it without blowing a whole paycheck or throwing a bake sale. If you're not looking to make IRL friends, ask social followers to donate to your org and offer to match whatever they contribute. If you do wanna be around other passionate people, join a volunteer group and offer to drive others who are short on gas money. Whomst doesn't love feeling like a sugar mama? Whomst?

## HOW TO USE THE SOCIALS FOR THE GREATER GOOD

### FOLLOW

See an organization doing cool things? Let it know by supporting its content. "Each follower is a relationship that can be mobilized," says Deja Foxx, founder of Gen Z Girl Gang, a community "redefining sisterhood for a new generation" through social media, and a former social strategist for Vice President Kamala Harris.

**DEJA FOXX,**
FOUNDER OF GEN Z GIRL GANG

### LINK

Share a link in your IG Story and bio so your followers can learn more about the org you're volunteering or raising money for. Tell them why it's important to you and exactly what you want them to do (donate! volunteer! repost!). You could drop these Stories daily, but it's no biggie if you don't. Still: "That extra attention and validation might be the deciding factor for someone to donate to that organization over a similar one," says Sloane Stephens, founder of the Sloane Stephens Foundation, which tutors and coaches underserved students around the world. "You never know what will make the difference."

**SLOANE STEPHENS,**
FOUNDER OF THE SLOANE STEPHENS FOUNDATION

### SHARE

Maybe you whip up an infographic on Canva, create a TikTok of your last volunteering adventure, or post about a podcast you listened to.

Whatever shareable content you put out there, your friends and followers are paying attention. "Every one of the people who follow us has a stake in what we care about because they care about us," Foxx says.

### ▶LIVE

It's not easy to host a Live, but if you want to go the extra mile, you can ask followers to send questions about your cause or invite someone to be your guest for a casual Q&A. Chatting with someone running for city council, for example, might encourage those in your community to get out and vote or even to run for office themselves.

GETTY IMAGES (3).

# need. it. now.

**JUST RIGHT PET FOOD**

### DOG FOOD AS UNIQUE AS YOUR BEST FRIEND

Just Right is your dog's new favorite kibble. Personalized nutrition based on their unique lifestyle and health needs. Expertly formulated, delivered monthly. Build your perfect blend and get 50% off your first order.

justrightpetfood.com

**LIVECLEAR**

### REDUCE THE ALLERGEN. EMBRACE THE FREEDOM.

Purina Pro Plan LiveClear is the first and only cat food shown to reduce the major allergen in cat hair and dander starting in the third week of daily feeding. Save $8 when you shop online today!

proplan.com/liveclearchallenge

**WOMEN'S HEALTH BLUE LIGHT GLASSES**

### LOOK CUTE AF ON YOUR NEXT ZOOM

Women's Health Blue Light Glasses are SO affordable and totally cute. Not to mention, they help improve your sleep (love that for you!). What more could you want? Snag yourself a pair ASAP. You're welcome in advance!

womenshealthmag.com/eyewear

L.A. Girl
new!
tinted foundation
skin loving ingredients
PANTHENOL
GINSENG ROOT EXTRACT
GLYCERIN & VITAMIN E
SAFFLOWER SEED OIL
L.A. Girl® tinted foundation BUILDABLE, NATURAL FINISH
22 tinted SHADES
FIND YOUR MATCH+MORE!
AVAILABLE AT SELECT ULTA BEAUTY
#LAGirlCosmetics
WWW.LAGIRLUSA.COM
CRUELTY FREE

# WAIT, SHOULD THIS BE YOUR *JOB* JOB?

Whether you want to join a nonprofit or start your own, consider these v important Qs.

### You've been thinking about this for a while, yes?

Well, it might be worth pursuing, says Brigitte Amiri, an attorney at the ACLU who fights for reproductive rights. She got interested in abortion access in high school and tried to start a pro-choice club at her Catholic university. When that didn't work out, she knew she wanted to do this full-time.

### Can you live with a smaller paycheck?

Making a difference in the things you care about is *so* fulfilling, but unfortch, your take-home pay might not be, says Alexis McGill Johnson, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Federation of America and the Planned Parenthood Action Fund. "You have to understand what's really important to you." And if you're comfy trading a higher salary for a higher purpose, maybe it's time to get after it.

### Do you like to rally people?

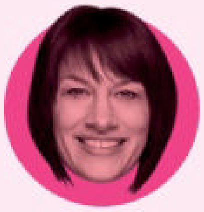
Being able to bring folks together is key, so if consensus building and conflict resolution aren't your jam, you may want to reconsider this path, says McGill Johnson.

### Are you cool working your way up?

The smartest way to get into the nonprofit game might not be launching your own, says Foxx. "I started out canvassing and going to trainings," she explains. "Look at the work already being done and see how you can best plug into it."

### How's your savings?

Cash at the ready was essential for Nadya Okamoto, founder of PERIOD, a nonprofit focused on ending period poverty and stigma. Before she launched, she kept six jobs until she had enough for living expenses while working for herself full-time. "I didn't get paid until three years in," she says. Obvi, this is just one scenario, but regardless of what yours is, you'll need at least six months of savings to start your own world-changing endeavor.



**BRIGITTE AMIRI,** AN ATTORNEY AT THE ACLU FIGHTING FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

**ALEXIS MCGILL JOHNSON,** PRESIDENT AND CEO OF PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION OF AMERICA

**NADYA OKAMOTO,** FOUNDER OF PERIOD

> EVERYONE'S CAPACITY IS GOING TO LOOK A LITTLE DIFFERENT
>
> —REP. ILHAN OMAR

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TRUSTED NUTRITION FOR EVERY LIFE STAGE
Muscle + Brain Development
WITH REAL FARM-RAISED CHICKEN
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Immune + Joint Health
WITH REAL FARM-RAISED CHICKEN
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Cat Chow
Senior
Essentials 7+
Immune + Joint Health
MADE WITH REAL FARM-RAISED CHICKEN

### Just a list of

### UNDERRATED

# HALLOWEEN CANDIES

### THAT NEED TO AVENGE THEIR REPUTATIONS

By
SARAH WELDON

1

**CANDY CORN**
*Nothing* is more satisfying than delicately biting off each color with your front teeth.

2

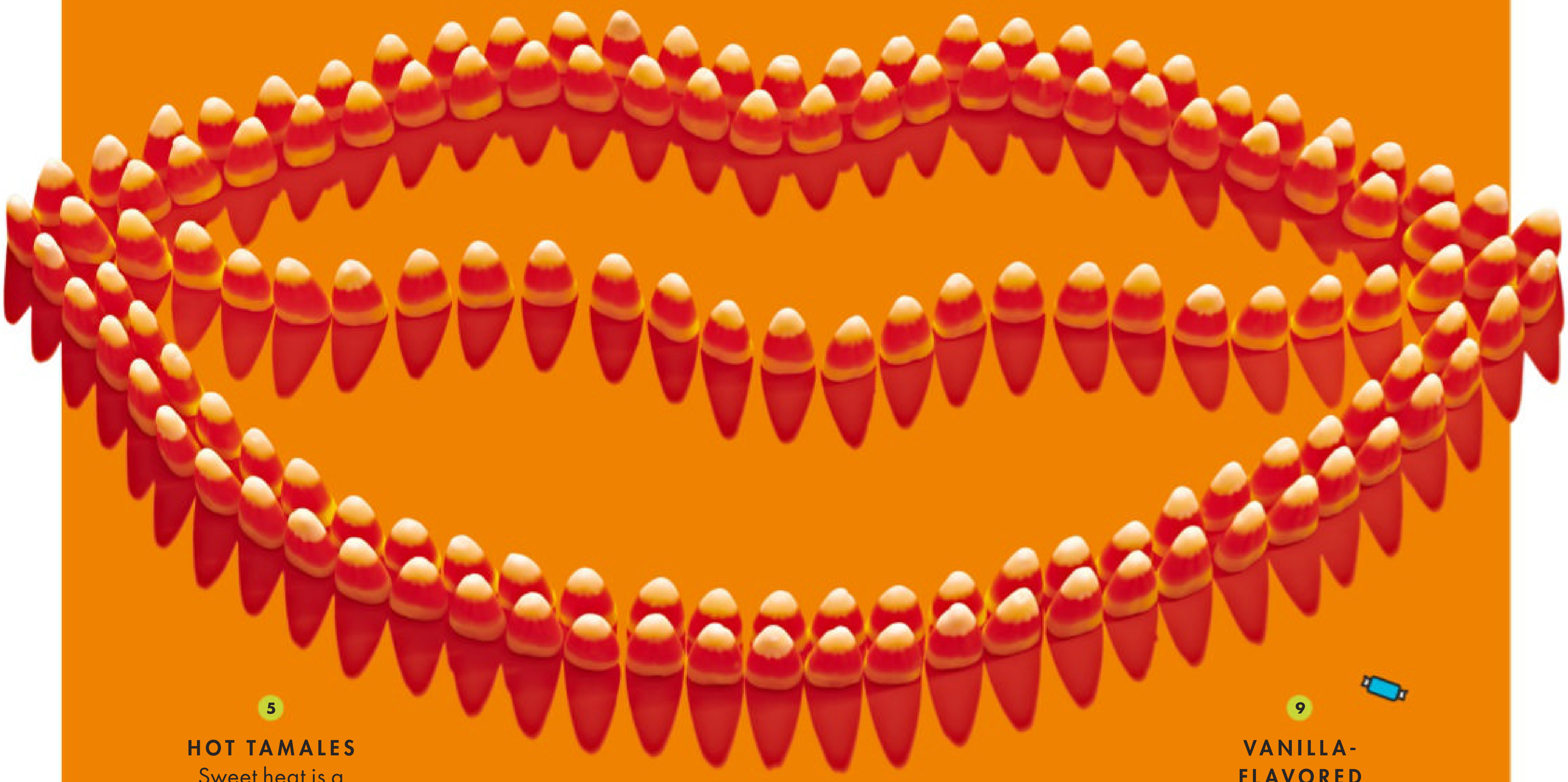
**DOTS**
The real-fruit-iest tasting of the fake-fruit candies. Fight me.

3

**NECCO WAFERS**
It's an endless sleeve of colorful sugar that fits in your pocket. I rest my case.

4

**MARY JANE**
The peanut butter cup supremacy needs to end so this nutty taffy can thrive.



5

**HOT TAMALES**
Sweet heat is a v effective palate cleanser between chocolate and gummy courses.

6

**RUNTS**
They taste like the hot older cousin of orange Tic Tacs. Where is the lie?

7

**MYSTERY FLAVOR DUM DUMS**
Don't quit your job—spice up your life with these instead.

8

**CANDY BUTTONS**
The blue one is actually lime and that's the most fun Fun Fact™ ever.

9

**VANILLA-FLAVORED TOOTSIE ROLL**
Same texture as the regs, just sweeter with—I swear—a lil hit of umami.

FOOD STYLIST: JEN BEAUCHESNE.

Photograph by TED + CHELSEA CAVANAUGH

# Peace by piece.

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Kraft
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Deliciously Paired
MOZZARELLA
PARMESAN
for PIZZA

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BROKE HOSTING

# Watch me turn frozen chicken nuggets into fancy apps that'll impress your friends

By ASHLEY OERMAN

### TEENY CHICKEN AND WAFFLES

Place a baked nug on a mini Eggo (trust, you'll be craving one after page 50), drizzle with honey, top with another Eggo, and impale with a toothpick for upscale vibes.

### BB CHICKEN SAMMIES

Break open that refrigerated biscuit dough, divide it into biscuits, cut each one into 4 blobs, then roll those blobs into smooth balls. Bake 'em at 375 degrees till golden. As they cool, mix together 2 parts mayo and 1 part hot sauce. Dab a little spicy mayo on a cooked nugget, then place that chicky between those sweet buns. Pop a toothpick in the center and top with a mini gherkin.

### LIL CHICKEN PARM BITES

Bake some frozen nuggets as directed, taking them out a minute early to sprinkle each with a pinch of shredded mozzarella. Pop them back in till melty. Slice a baguette widthwise into ½-inch pieces and toast them in the oven, then spread pasta sauce over each slice. Stack on your cheesy chicken, a cherry tomato, and a basil leaf before poking a toothpick through your tower.

It's not weird if you wanna lick your hand. It's encouraged.

FOOD STYLIST: JEN BEAUCHESNE.

Photograph by TED + CHELSEA CAVANAUGH

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HEALTHY, LAZY LUNCHES

# Make yourself a pot of soup already

By ASHLEY OERMAN

Veggie soup for the cold, dead soul.

**Get past the old-lady stereotype** and on my level because nothing's more satisfying than a bowl of healthy things. Each of these can be made with the same *suuuper* (heh) easy recipe: (1) Gather the ingredients and your biggest pot, (2) sauté any firm veggies and garlic in olive oil with a sprinkle of seasonings, (3) dump in broth, rinsed canned goods, and any meats, (4) once the flaves become one, season some more and add quick-cooking greens and/or pasta, (5) remove bay leaves, scoop it into a bowl, and ~garnish~ with any remaining toppings. That's it!

## GRANDMA-ESQUE CHICKEN SOUP

| | |
|---|---|
| | Olive oil |
| 10 | cloves garlic, chopped (you heard me: 10) |
| 1 | onion, chopped |
| 4 | carrots, chopped |
| 1 | bunch celery stalks, chopped |
| 2 | whole bay leaves |
| | Salt and pepper |
| 2 | boxes chicken stock |
| 1 | 15-ounce can chickpeas, rinsed |
| 1 | rotisserie chicken, torn |
| 4 | cups chopped kale |

## MEXICAN-ISH VEGGIE SOUP

Same ingredients as above, but leave out the chicken (or don't), sub the chickpeas for a 15-ounce can of black beans, rinsed, and add:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | green pepper, chopped |
| | Cumin powder |
| | Cayenne powder |
| | Chili powder |
| 1 | jalapeño, chopped |
| | Lime juice, to taste |
| | Cilantro, to taste |

## ALMOST MINESTRONE

Same ingredients as the first recipe, but leave out the chicken and add:

| | |
|---|---|
| | Dried oregano |
| | Dried rosemary |
| 1 | to 2 cans diced tomatoes, rinsed |
| ½ | cup teeny-tiny little pasta (like orzo or ditalini) |
| | Grated Parm, to taste |

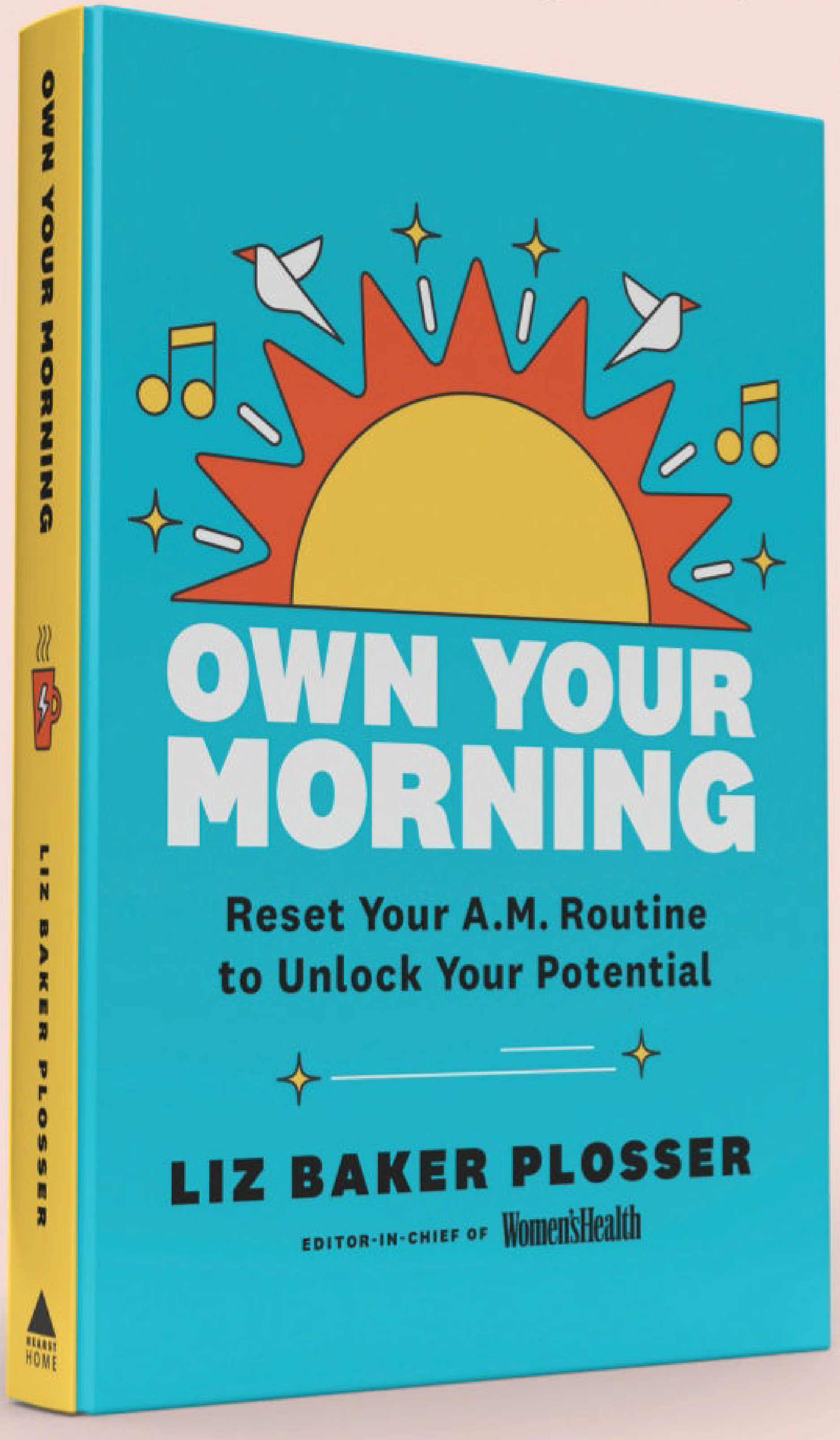
FOOD STYLIST: JEN BEAUCHESNE.

Photograph by TED + CHELSEA CAVANAUGH

# RISE AND TRULY SHINE

## WITH A LIFE-CHANGING NEW MORNING ROUTINE.

Find clarity and happiness with this start-your-day plan that prioritizes your wellness and life goals.


OWN YOUR MORNING
Reset Your A.M. Routine to Unlock Your Potential
LIZ BAKER PLOSSER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF Women'sHealth
OWN YOUR MORNING
LIZ BAKER PLOSSER
HEARST HOME

“*Own Your Morning* will guide you to create personalized daily rituals that center you, energize you, and give you the power to fully show up for your day.”

—Jay Shetty, #1 New York Times best-selling author of *Think Like a Monk* and host of the *On Purpose* podcast

Order now at **womenshealthmag.com/ownyourmorning** or wherever books are sold!

HEARST HOME

# 5 things you're not putting in your waffle iron but should be

Boldly going where no hangry person has gone before.

By **SARAH WELDON**

**Dash** Mini Waffle Maker, $10, amazon.com

Sorry, this page is not a scratch-and-sniff. :(

### CINNAMON ROLL DOUGH

Look at the icing in those grooves. Now imagine how the little pockets of gooeyness will burst when you take a bi—oh, uh, are you good?

### BROWNIE BATTER *AND* COOKIE DOUGH

I said what I said! Layer le batter on top of some presliced cookie dough and close the iron for two-ish minutes. It's the fastest way to Frankenstein the luxe brownie your snacking self deserves.

### EGGS

Breakfast can get boring, so why not crack an egg on your iron? Leave it open and cook until the yolk is set, then sandwich it between toast, a bagel, a hot dog bun, or whatever bread form you prefer.

### BRIE

Yeah, the whole wheel. Smoosh it in the iron for, like, less than a minute. Add a drizzle of honey or a swoosh of jam if the melty cheese demands it (it does).

### A PIZZA SLICE

If you fold it in half and waffle it (yes, a verb), you'll have the most joyful quasi-calzone. Zap it in the iron till it's *ooooozing*—in a good way.

FOOD STYLIST: JEN BEAUCHESNE.

Photograph by TED + CHELSEA CAVANAUGH

# Important Facts About Kyleena® (levonorgestrel-releasing intrauterine system) 19.5 mg

Read this Patient Information carefully before you decide if Kyleena is right for you. This information does not take the place of talking with your gynecologist or other healthcare professional (HCP) who specializes in women's health. If you have any questions about Kyleena, ask your HCP. You should also learn about other birth control methods to choose the one that is best for you.

**Kyleena does not protect against HIV infection (AIDS) and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).**

**INDICATION FOR KYLEENA**

Kyleena is a hormone-releasing intrauterine device (IUD) that prevents pregnancy for up to 5 years.

**Who might use Kyleena?**

You might choose Kyleena if you:

- want long-term birth control that provides a low chance of getting pregnant (less than 1 in 100)
- want birth control that works continuously for up to 5 years
- want birth control that is reversible
- want a birth control method that you do not need to take daily
- are willing to use a birth control method that is placed in the uterus
- want birth control that does not contain estrogen

**Do not use Kyleena if you:**

- are or might be pregnant; Kyleena cannot be used as an emergency contraceptive
- have a serious pelvic infection called pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) or have had PID in the past unless you have had a normal pregnancy after the infection went away
- have an untreated genital infection now
- have had a serious pelvic infection in the past 3 months after a pregnancy
- can get infections easily. For example, if you:
  - have multiple sexual partners or your partner has multiple sexual partners
  - have problems with your immune system
  - use or abuse intravenous drugs
- have or suspect you might have cancer of the uterus or cervix
- have bleeding from the vagina that has not been explained
- have liver disease or a liver tumor
- have breast cancer or any other cancer that is sensitive to progestin (a female hormone), now or in the past
- have an IUD in your uterus already
- have a condition of the uterus that changes the shape of the uterine cavity, such as large fibroid tumors
- are allergic to these ingredients:
  - do not use Kyleena if you're allergic to levonorgestrel, silicone, polyethylene, silver, silica, barium sulfate, polypropylene, or copper phthalocyanine

**Before having Kyleena placed, tell your HCP about all of your medical conditions including if you:**

- have any of the conditions listed above
- have had a heart attack
- have had a stroke
- were born with heart disease or have problems with your heart valves
- have problems with blood clotting or take medicine to reduce clotting
- have high blood pressure
- recently had a baby or are breastfeeding
- have severe headaches or migraine headaches
- have AIDS, HIV, or any other STI

Tell your HCP about all of the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

**Should I check that Kyleena is in place?**

Yes, you should check that Kyleena is in proper position by feeling the removal threads. It is a good habit to do this 1 time a month. If you feel more than just the threads or if you cannot feel the threads, be sure to call your HCP and avoid intercourse or use non-hormonal back-up birth control, as Kyleena may not be in the right position and may not prevent pregnancy.

**How soon after placement should I return to my HCP?**

Call your HCP if you have any questions or concerns (see "After Kyleena has been placed, when should I call my HCP?"). Otherwise, you should return to your HCP for a follow-up visit 4 to 6 weeks after Kyleena is placed to make sure that Kyleena is in the right position.

**Can I use tampons or menstrual cups with Kyleena?**

Yes, tampons or menstrual cups may be used with Kyleena. Change tampons or menstrual cups with care to avoid pulling the threads of Kyleena. If you think you may have pulled Kyleena out of place, avoid intercourse or use back-up birth control.

**What if I become pregnant while using Kyleena?**

Call your HCP right away if you think you may be pregnant. If possible, also do a urine pregnancy test. If you get pregnant while using Kyleena, you may have an ectopic pregnancy. This means that the pregnancy is not in the uterus. Unusual vaginal bleeding or abdominal pain may be a sign of ectopic pregnancy.

Ectopic pregnancy is a medical emergency that often requires surgery. Ectopic pregnancy can cause internal bleeding, infertility, and even death.

There are also risks if you get pregnant while using Kyleena and the pregnancy is in the uterus. Severe infection, miscarriage, premature delivery, and even death can occur with pregnancies that continue with an IUD. Because of this, your HCP may try to remove Kyleena, even though removing it may cause a miscarriage. If Kyleena cannot be removed, talk with your HCP about the benefits and risks of continuing the pregnancy and possible effects of the hormone on your unborn baby.

If you continue your pregnancy, see your HCP regularly. Call your HCP right away if you get flu-like symptoms, fever, chills, cramping, pain, bleeding, vaginal discharge, or fluid leaking from your vagina. These may be signs of infection.

**How will Kyleena change my periods?**

For the first 3 to 6 months, your period may become irregular and the number of bleeding days may increase. You may also have frequent spotting or light bleeding. Some women have heavy bleeding during this time. You may also have cramping during the first few weeks. After you have used Kyleena for a while, the number of bleeding and spotting days is likely to lessen. For some women, periods will stop altogether. When Kyleena is removed, your menstrual periods should return.

**Is it safe to breastfeed while using Kyleena?**

You may use Kyleena when you are breastfeeding. Kyleena is not likely to affect the quality or amount of your breast milk or the health of your nursing baby. However, isolated cases of decreased milk production have been reported. The risk of Kyleena going into the wall of the uterus (becoming embedded) or going through the wall of the uterus is increased if Kyleena is inserted while you are breastfeeding.

**Will Kyleena interfere with sexual intercourse?**

You and your partner should not feel Kyleena during intercourse. Kyleena is placed in the uterus, not in the vagina. Sometimes your partner may feel the threads. If this occurs, or if you or your partner experience pain during sex, talk with your HCP.

**Can I have an MRI with Kyleena in place?**

Kyleena can be safely scanned with MRI only under specific conditions. Before you have an MRI, tell your HCP that you have Kyleena, an IUD, in place.

**What are the possible serious side effects of Kyleena?**

- **Ectopic pregnancy and intrauterine pregnancy risks.** There are risks if you become pregnant while using Kyleena (see "What if I become pregnant while using Kyleena?").
- **Life-threatening infection.** Life-threatening infection can occur within the first few days after Kyleena is placed. Call your HCP immediately if you develop severe pain or fever shortly after Kyleena is placed.
- **Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID).** Some IUD users get a serious pelvic infection called PID. PID is usually sexually transmitted. You have a higher chance of getting PID if you or your partner has sex with other partners. PID can cause serious problems such as infertility, ectopic pregnancy or pelvic pain that does not go away. PID is usually treated with antibiotics. More serious cases of PID may require surgery including removal of the uterus (hysterectomy). In rare cases, infections that start as PID can even cause death. Tell your HCP right away if you have any of these signs of PID: long-lasting or heavy bleeding, unusual vaginal discharge, low abdominal (stomach area) pain, painful sex, chills, fever, genital lesions or sores.
- **Perforation.** Kyleena may go into the wall of the uterus (become embedded) or go through the wall of the uterus. This is called perforation. If this occurs, Kyleena may no longer prevent pregnancy. If perforation occurs, Kyleena may move outside the uterus and can cause internal scarring, infection, or damage to other organs, and you may need surgery to have Kyleena removed. Excessive pain or vaginal bleeding during placement of Kyleena, pain or bleeding that gets worse after placement, or not being able to feel the threads may happen with perforation. The risk of perforation is increased if Kyleena is inserted while you are breastfeeding, or if you have recently given birth.
- **Expulsion.** Kyleena may come out by itself. This is called expulsion. Expulsion occurs in about 4 out of 100 women. Excessive pain or vaginal bleeding during placement of Kyleena, pain or bleeding that gets worse after placement, or not being able to feel the threads may happen with expulsion. You may become pregnant if Kyleena comes out. If you think that Kyleena has come out, avoid intercourse or use non-hormonal back-up birth control (such as condoms or spermicide) and call your HCP. The risk of expulsion is increased with insertion right after delivery or second-trimester abortion.

**Common side effects of Kyleena include:**

- **Pain, bleeding or dizziness during and after placement.** If these symptoms do not stop 30 minutes after placement, Kyleena may not have been placed correctly. Your HCP will examine you to see if Kyleena needs to be removed or replaced.
- **Changes in bleeding.** You may have bleeding and spotting between menstrual periods, especially during the first 3-6 months. Sometimes the bleeding is heavier than usual at first. However, the bleeding usually becomes lighter than usual and may be irregular. Call your HCP if the bleeding remains heavier than usual or increases after it has been light for a while.
- **Missed menstrual periods.** About 12 out of 100 women stop having periods after 1 year of Kyleena use. If you have any concerns that you may be pregnant while using Kyleena, do a urine pregnancy test and call your HCP. If you do not have a period for 6 weeks during Kyleena use, call your HCP. When Kyleena is removed, your menstrual periods should return.
- **Cysts on the ovary.** About 22 out of 100 women using Kyleena develop a cyst on the ovary. These cysts usually disappear on their own in 2 to 3 months. However, cysts can cause pain and sometimes cysts will need surgery.

Other common side effects for Kyleena include:

- inflammation or infection of the outer part of your vagina (vulvovaginitis)
- abdomen or pelvic pain
- headache or migraine
- acne or greasy skin
- painful periods
- sore or painful breasts

These are not all of the possible side effects with Kyleena. For more information, ask your HCP.

Call your HCP for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088. You may also report side effects to Bayer Healthcare Pharmaceuticals at 1-888-842-2937.

**After Kyleena has been placed, when should I call my HCP?**

If Kyleena is accidentally removed and you had vaginal intercourse within the preceding week, you may be at risk of pregnancy, and you should talk to an HCP.

Call your HCP if you have any concerns about Kyleena. Be sure to call if you:

- think you are pregnant
- have pelvic pain, abdominal pain, or pain during sex
- have unusual vaginal discharge or genital sores
- have unexplained fever, flu-like symptoms or chills
- might be exposed to STIs
- are concerned that Kyleena may have been expelled (came out)
- cannot feel Kyleena's threads
- develop very severe or migraine headaches
- have yellowing of the skin or whites of the eyes. These may be signs of liver problems.
- have had a stroke or heart attack
- become HIV positive or your partner becomes HIV positive
- have severe vaginal bleeding or bleeding that lasts a long time or concerns you

To learn more, talk about Kyleena with your HCP and see the FDA-approved Full Prescribing Information found on www.kyleena.com, or call 1-866-647-3646.

BAYER

Kyleena
(levonorgestrel-releasing intrauterine system) 19.5 mg

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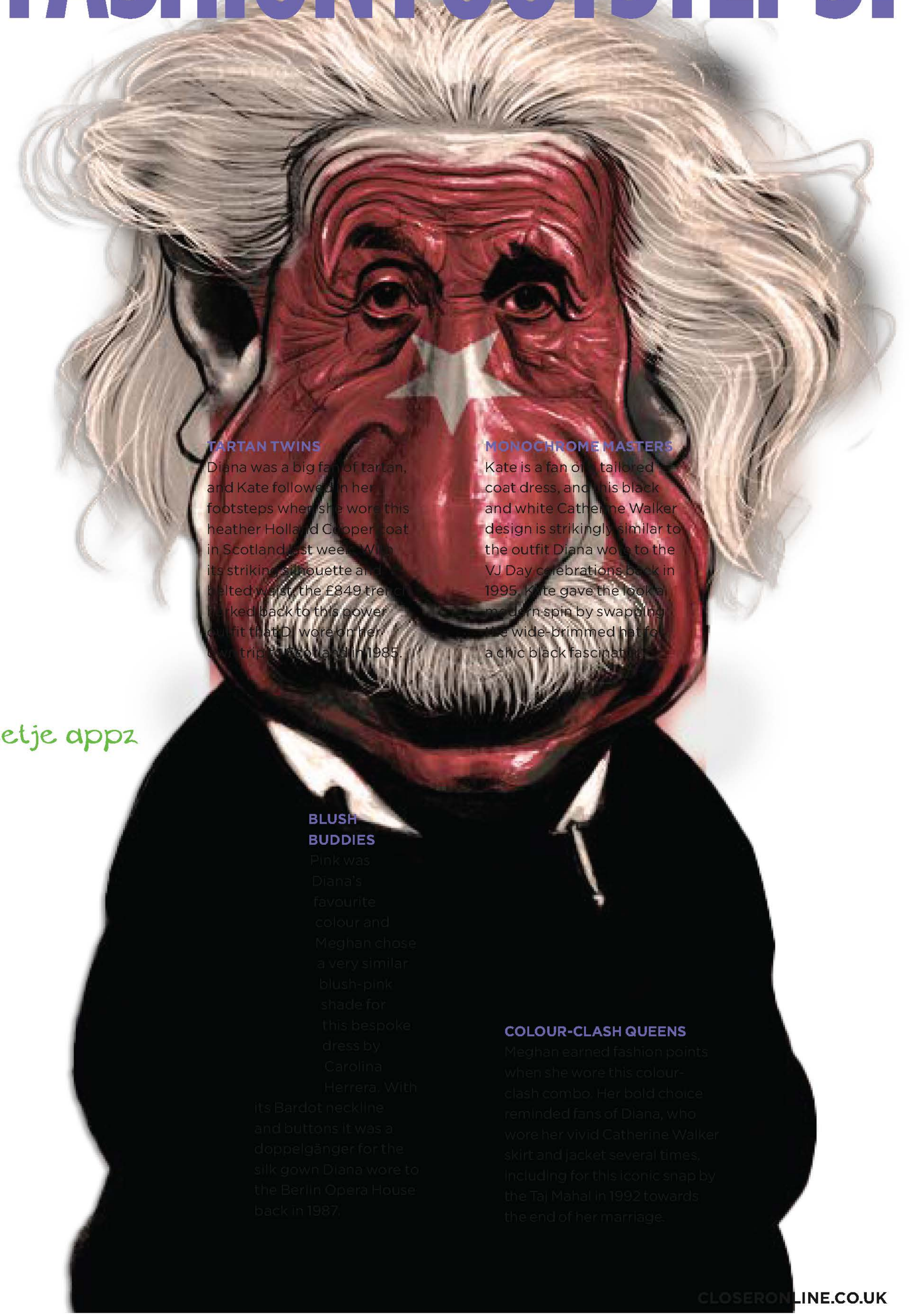
PP-KYL-US-0935-1 / July 2021

# ’S FASHION FOOTSTEPS?



### TARTAN TWINS

Diana was a big fan of tartan, and Kate followed in her footsteps when she wore this heather Holland Cooper coat in Scotland last week. With its striking silhouette and belted waist, the £849 trench harked back to this power outfit that Di wore on her own trip to Scotland in 1985.

### MONOCHROME MASTERS

Kate is a fan of a tailored coat dress, and this black and white Catherine Walker design is strikingly similar to the outfit Diana wore to the VJ Day celebrations back in 1995. Kate gave the look a modern spin by swapping the wide-brimmed hat for a chic black fascinator.

teetje appz

### BLUSH BUDDIES

Pink was Diana’s favourite colour and Meghan chose a very similar blush-pink shade for this bespoke dress by Carolina Herrera. With its Bardot neckline and buttons it was a doppelgänger for the silk gown Diana wore to the Berlin Opera House back in 1987.

### COLOUR-CLASH QUEENS

Meghan earned fashion points when she wore this colour-clash combo. Her bold choice reminded fans of Diana, who wore her vivid Catherine Walker skirt and jacket several times, including for this iconic snap by the Taj Mahal in 1992 towards the end of her marriage.

PHOTOS: GETTY, CAMERA PRESS, REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

### Just a list of

## WAYS YOU'RE

# MANIFESTING

## WITHOUT EVEN REALIZING IT

By ERIKA W. SMITH

Guess how I got this lilac mani....

① That annual birthday vision board with all your travel, work, life, etc. goals? That you tape to your wall so you can always see it? Yep.

② See also: the self-love mantra you repeat while looking in the mirror each morning. Bonus points if it's out loud.

③ Checking your favorite company's Careers page every Friday. Twice.

④ Using a Google Doc to track your progress toward a financial goal ("made dinner at home every night this week instead of DoorDash'ing Taco Bell").

⑤ All the times you repost a hilariously specific @Affirmations post to your IG Story.

⑥ Singing along to your favorite Megan Thee Stallion song.

⑦ Breaking down a Big Deal idea, like starting your own biz, into a zillion less overwhelming steps: (1) Reach out to cool former coworker for intel. (The universe is reading your email too, bb.)

⑧ Texting your bestie "✨ it's gonna happen ✨" whenever one of you mentions something you want, be it a vacation to Belize or a new Rihanna album.

Photographs by AARON DURALL

# How to manifest anything and everything

Who couldn't use a little cosmic help?

By ALIZA KELLY

Have you ever wanted something so badly that you basically willed it to come true? Maybe you imagined it in detail, spent hours working toward it, or told yourself over and over that it would happen...until it did. This is called manifestation, and it can work for major things (getting into your dream college, meeting someone eerily perfect for you) and smaller stuff (scoring a job interview, finding a new apartment). And yes, it can happen on a subconscious level (I know you've read page 52, right?), but you can also actively manifest whatever it is you desire, according to me and my new book *This Is Your Destiny: Using Astrology to Manifest Your Best Life*—and also, soon, to you.

## Money

Dig your checkbook out of your drawer and imagine what it would feel like not to be worried about cash. Then grab a pen and write out a check...to yourself, for an amount that would make you feel financially stable. Choose a future date (like a few years from now) and sign it "So Mote It Be." Put the check in a drawer or your wallet. Now you're working toward a financial goal, and the universe is cheering you on.

## Confidence

Take a piece of paper, and on the left side, write three things you love about yourself (like, say, your optimistic outlook, your eyelashes, and your ability to reach Inbox Zero). On the right side, write down three of your insecurities. Then draw lines between the columns while thinking about how amazing your best traits are and trying to feel compassion for your insecurities. Repeat nightly or weekly to learn how to be kinder to and more confident in yourself.

*visualizing myself finally winning a game of Monopoly*

## Love

You'll need two red or pink candles and some sugar. Hold the first (unlit!) candle to your heart, say your name out loud, and picture your energy going into the candle. Next, hold the second candle and say the romantic attributes you want to bring into your life (like loyalty, compassion, amazing sex). Place the candles approximately six inches from each other and make a sugar path between them. Finally, slowly bring the candles closer together, envisioning a light that gets brighter and brighter in your mind's eye. When the candles are just about an inch apart, light them and let those flames burn, bb. Feel free to repeat as often as you like, and trust that true love is coming your way.

## Career

Connect with your breath and shake your hands, picturing energy flowing from your head to your fingertips. Then set a timer for four minutes and write down words, phrases, ideas, or symbols that feel inspiring—from the work-related, like "self-employed," to the abstract, like "kangaroos" (stay with me!). When the time is up, turn your notes into a list, and look for common themes (independence? flexibility? lots of nature-related things?) and brainstorm what's next. You are v welcome for this free cosmic career advice.

## Friendship

Open your cal (either IRL or digital) and block out time for friend-related activities, even if you don't have actual plans yet. Then begin reaching out to current friends, we-were-close-a-whole-pandemic-ago friends, and we're-TikTok-mutuals friends to organize happy hours, phone calls, or walks around your neighborhood. If you're not getting enough RSVPs, use the time to check out new communities, like a book club or BTS fan group. As time goes by, you'll connect and meet with more and more ppl—and make a new bestie or five.

## MANIFESTATION CONFESSIONS

"A popular radio station in my city was giving away concert tickets and a meet and greet for my favorite band. Every day, I kept my lucky crystal nearby and wrote in my notebook as if I had already won the contest. Guess what? I won the contest!"

**—CAMILLE, 29**

"While getting over a bad breakup, I wrote a list of every single thing I wanted in my next partner, from personality traits to hair color. Three months after writing the list, I met my now-fiancé. He's everything I ever wanted and more, and I wouldn't have known that without manifesting it."

**—ISABEL, 25**

"I was in a career I was miserable in, but I couldn't afford to just leave. I spent a few years saving money, and when it was time to quit, I started visualizing myself as and acting like a successful business owner. A year later, I'm attracting clients who share my energy, helping others find comfort in this chaotic world, and able to sustain myself and stay at home with my family."

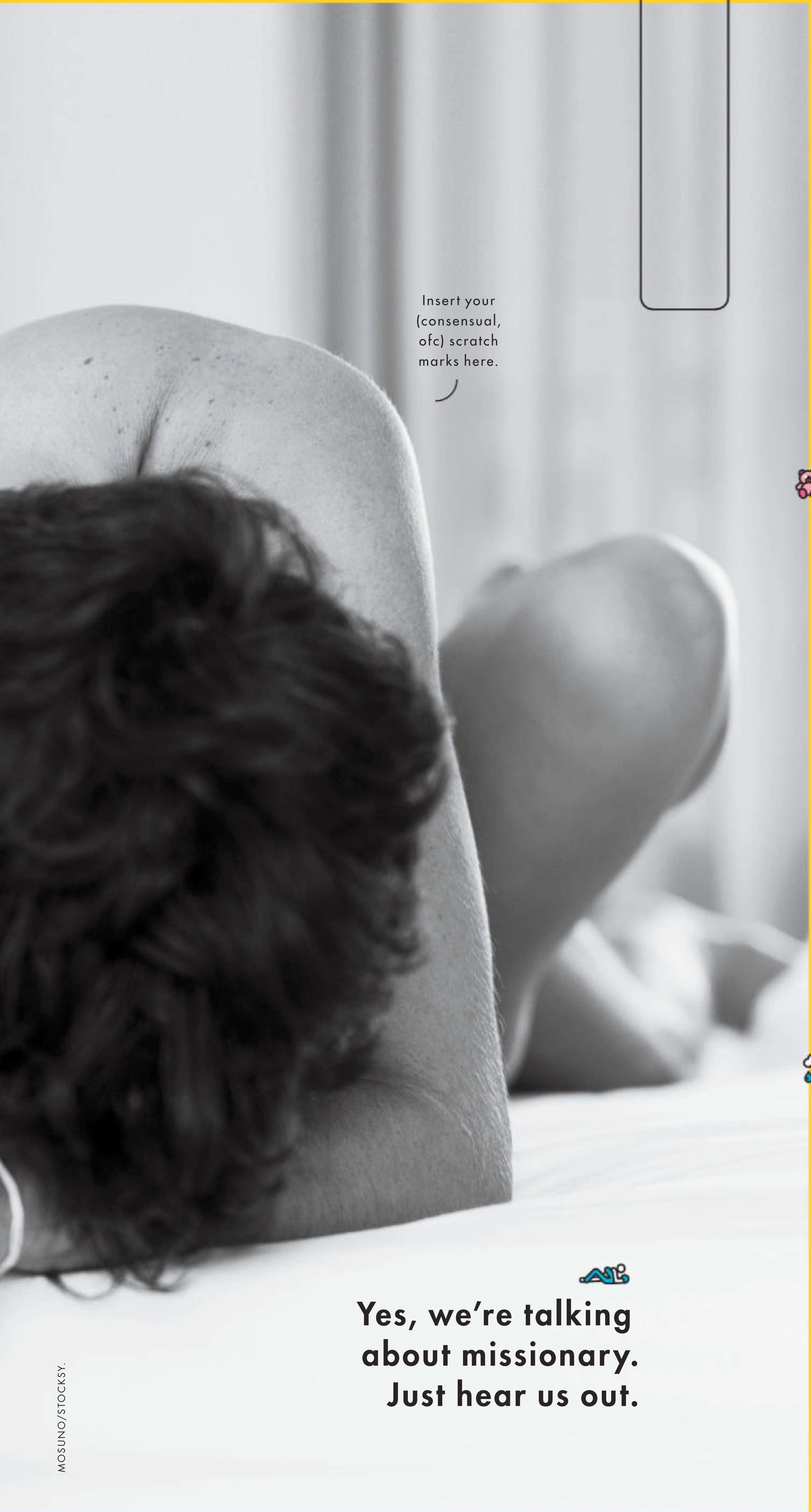
**—GIGI, 30**

Just a list of

TIPS FOR MAKING “THE MOST BORING SEX POSITION”

# THE BEST SEX POSITION

By RACHEL VARINA



Insert your (consensual, ofc) scratch marks here.

MOSUNO/STOCKSY.

## Yes, we're talking about missionary. Just hear us out.

①

If you're not using lube yet, this is your official order from the universe to do so ASAP. The first step in making missionary ev-er-y-thing is *lots* of lubrication.

②

Grab a pillow or your childhood stuffed animal and shove it under your booty. This will elevate your hips, which = even deeper penetration. (Sry, Mr. Cuddles.)

③

Pull a *Pretty Woman* and initiate a no-kiss rule to turn up the tension. P.S. Not wearing Julia Roberts' iconic boots while you're at it would be a big mistake. Huge.

④

Do it on the floor, on the table, in the rain while the instrumental version of "Wildest Dreams" plays à la Daphne and Simon. Just get off the damn bed.

⑤

A little consensual hair pulling, neck biting, and dirty talk will very much keep you in the moment. (And keep your mind from wandering or, say, counting ceiling cracks.) (Seriously, tho, building maintenance needs to get on that.)

⑥

That wig you bought for your Cruella costume: Put it on. Spicy, right? You're also now immune to any "my hair is stuck under their hand and might accidentally be ripped from my scalp" moments.

⑦

Better yet, both of you should wear one. You won't know which way is up, which way is down, or which one of you pulls it off better.

⑧

Give your clitoris more attention. Add a vibrator or cock ring to the mix for a better chance of orgasming—and a lesser chance of anyone getting a finger cramp.

⑨

Use a fake British accent. Whispering "I want to wank your knob" will have you laughing (bc this should also be fun, k?) and not caring about the sweat droplets dripping all over the place.

# Hooking up with a random Tinder match saved my life

I never had high hopes for dating apps until now.

By ELLA SOMERVILLE GLOVER
As told to TAYLOR ANDREWS

**“You have** stage III breast cancer” are so not the words you expect to hear at 29 years old. I heard them five days after a Tinder date told me he felt a lump in my left boob, four days after I’d had a biopsy done on said boob, and one day after my friends and I joked about the odds of me *actually* getting cancer in a year like 2020. Apparently, for me, living through a global pandemic could get much worse.

But let me back up a bit. Before my diagnosis, I had just ended a six-year relationship and did what any newly single person would do: I got on the apps. Sam had “coffee guy” written in his bio, so he was an obvious Swipe Right. For our first date, we went to a bunch of breweries and shared a lil smooch at the end of the night. Neither of us wanted anything serious, but I was getting zero fuckboi vibes; he made me feel secure, comfortable, confident, all the things. We decided to see each other again.

**Breasts should be lumpy at my age...right?**

One night, as we were lying in bed, Sam started rubbing his hands all over my tits just for the hell of it. (For any of you who have dated boob guys, you know this is something that just happens—regardless of whether or not it leads to anything sexual.)

“Have you ever had this lump checked out?” he asked. I immediately went into full-on defense mode. “No, that’s just my boob,” I said, feeling the spot for myself. I mean, breasts are supposed to be lumpy at my age...right? We moved on, but I went to the doctor the next day anyway.

I got scheduled for an ultrasound (fun fact: mammograms aren’t actually that great at detecting breast cancer in women under 40, since we tend to have denser breast tissue), and that’s how they found the five-centimeter-wide mass.

When the test came back, I literally thought, *Well, fuck.* How was I going to tell people? Talking about it would make it real, and I wasn’t ready for it to be.

This hand can give boob massages *and* exams.

I decided my first move would be to break things off with Sam. I didn't want to burden him with a bald-headed chick who would be tired, sick, and losing her fingernails. When I tried, though, he basically said, "Hi, no, not happening." His exact words: "If I didn't think I could do this, I'd say so. But let's give it a go; let's try to fight this together." So that's what we did.

Since cancer treatment can totally fuck up your fertility, I started IVF treatment in June, and then from July to November, I went through chemotherapy. Sam, the guy who was supposed to be around for "WYD?" texts only, was with me through it all. He stroked my bald head before bed so I could sleep at night, and when I vomited all over my walls because I couldn't make it to the toilet in time, he cleaned it up without saying a word.

When chemo was finally over, I said RIP to my left boob before the people in PPE chopped it off. (Yes, this was a mastectomy, not a plot in *American Horror Story*.) They also did a full lymph node removal. I said to Sam, "Of course I got breast cancer and had to get rid of a tit when I'm dating a boob guy." His response: "Don't worry, I'm a boob guy, not a *boobs* guy."

Radiation started at the end of March 2021, and I did that every day for five weeks straight until I was finally cancer-free. Now I'm awaiting reconstructive surgery, and I'll also be on hormone therapy for the next 10 years.

Meanwhile...Sam and I just moved in together—and I realize that had he not had the courage to say anything about the lump he felt, I might not be here today. In a way, what he did should be the bare minimum (bc if you feel something in a boob, a testicle, really anywhere on someone's body, you must tell that person), but that likely saved my life. Mainly because I probably wouldn't have found the lump myself: I had never done a proper breast self-exam before nor did I know how to. (All *very* important things, summed up for you over to the left.)

So yes, the man who still affectionately calls me "Lumpy" and gives me monthly "Sammograms" to check things out is pretty amazing. He has quite literally become my lifeline. And perhaps our story proves there is more to dating apps than just fishing pics and *The Office* references. Like, a lot more.

## YES! YOU! SHOULD! SELF-EXAMINE! YOUR! BREASTS!

Sorry for the exclams, but it's a good idea to do this once a month. Here's how:

**Step 1** → Stand topless in front of a mirror, shoulders straight, arms at your sides. Make sure there's no visible swelling, redness, puckering, and/or dimpling on your breasts.

**Step 2** → Raise your arms over your head and check for the same signs. (Breast irregularities may be easier to see with your arms up.)

**Step 3** → Squeeze each nipple gently, making sure no fluid or blood comes out.

**Step 4** → With your left arm raised, use a few fingers from your right hand to firmly touch your left breast, checking for lumps, bumps, and bulges. Begin at the nipple and move out in circles until you reach your underarms. Switch arms/breasts and repeat.

→ If you detect anything suspicious or notice that something has changed, check in with your gyno ASAP.

SOURCES: OB-GYNS KIMBERLY LANGDON, MD, AND HEATHER IROBUNDA, MD

NASOS ZOVOILIS/STOCKSY.

# This scary, cultish dating trend has gone mainstream

Yes, sometimes "too good to be true" is a very real thing.

By TAYLOR ANDREWS

Additional reporting by LAUREN L'AMIE

**Let's say you** met someone and they seem *great*. Like, everything-you've-been-manifesting-for-months great. Gives-you-more-compliments-than-you-get-in-the-bar-bathroom-line great. Makes-plans-to-bring-you-to-a-friend's-wedding-in-five-months great. Never-leaves-you-on-read great. And it's only been a week!

But before you start imagining sending out your own Save the Date, I have some news: All this greatness may be part of a manipulation strategy used by... actual cults. It's called love bombing, and it's a form of emotional abuse that happens when someone showers a partner with excessive affection in an attempt to control them.

The term was allegedly first coined by members of the Unification Church of the United States, a famous cult known as the Moonies. They love bombed people to encourage them to join their fellowship. Experts say other famous cults like NXIVM used a similar method to manufacture feelings of intense unity and loyalty in new recruits. And now it's possible that this type of behavior has infiltrated your dating apps.

Obviously (and hopefully!), most people you meet online won't go to cultlike extremes, but any love bomber's goal is generally the same: to enhance their ego by gaining power over you or anyone they're pursuing, says

Don't fall for the pretty flowers, friend.

psychotherapist Ami Kaplan. As you can probably guess, this is often a symptom of narcissistic personality disorder. Many love bombers have a lack of empathy for others, an inflated sense of self-worth, and a need for attention. They unearth other people's deep-seated insecurities and exploit them.

The confusing thing is that this is largely a subconscious behavior, says Kaplan. Your dates aren't necessarily setting out to manipulate you. And because love bombing is disguised as, well, *real* love, things can get extra tricky—before they get extra tough.

Because once someone is interested/connected/has shared their deepest darkest secret, "a love bomber no longer has any use for their partner and will begin withdrawing from the relationship," says Lori Nixon Bethea, PhD, owner of Intentional Hearts Counseling Services. At that point, "they may hurl insults, make disparaging remarks, gaslight, and cause their partner to feel invalidated and devalued."

Okay, whew. Deep breaths. This does *not* mean that you should fault yourself for wanting to feel loved and appreciated—and it's not *always* a red flag if someone compliments you or knows your Starbies order by heart early on. It just means that you can proceed with a bit of caution—and keep the red flags at right handy—while dating.

If you have just started seeing someone and aren't sure whether they're love bombing you or just majorly crushing, have a convo with them and express how you feel. You can say something as simple as, "Hey, this seems to be moving pretty fast. Maybe we should discuss it or set some boundaries." If they respect that, great. If they get angry, the best course of action is simple: Dump them, unfollow them, and move on.

> **If they drop the words "soul mate" after one or two dates, hi, yes, it could be time to run.**

## SIGNS YOU MAY BE IN THIS SITCH

- They spend lots and lots and lots of money on you right away.
- They make you feel guilty for wanting space or setting boundaries.
- They want to know your where abouts literally all the time—and not in a cute "checking in" way.
- Their feelings are really intense really fast.
- They make plans very, very far in advance in an attempt to lock you in for the next few months.

THERESA BEAR/STOCKSY.

Photographs by **AB+DM**
Fashion by **MICAELA ERLANGER**
Illustrations by **LINDSEY MADE THIS**

Staud dress. Stuart Weitzman heels. Celine sunglasses. Alexis Bittar earrings.

# IT'S ALL GOOD

She's broken tennis records, shattered glass ceilings, and, oh, she runs a handful of companies in her spare time. So what's next for Venus Williams? Doing everything—love included—exactly the way she wants to.

Words by **SYLVIA OBELL**

# TEN DAYS BEFORE OUR INTERVIEW,

Venus Williams made it clear how she handles the press: “I know every single person asking me a question can’t play as well as I can and never will.” Sitting in a media room at the French Open, eyes shadowed by a baseball cap, she scanned the room. “No matter what you say or what you write, you’ll never light a candle to me.”

As the mic drop reverberated across the internet, it dawned on me that I would have to be the one to pick said mic back up and ask Venus to elaborate. Some writers may have found that intimidating, but I felt the opposite—her words made me feel confident, empowered. Black women are often taught that

Galvan London dress. Giuseppe Zanotti heels. Ariana Boussard-Reifel earrings and bracelets.

we have to be "twice as good to get half as far" as our white counterparts in any given industry, and we rarely get to say aloud what it means when we succeed—that we are, in fact, the baddest bitch in the room (or as track and field star Sha'Carri Richardson would later succinctly put it, "that girl").

That's why I was fully prepared, as I opened my laptop for our Zoom, to honor the fact that Venus would once again be the best in the "room." What I wasn't prepared for, before I even asked my first question, was a compliment. "Your articles are beautiful," Venus said, sitting in front of her laptop in a silky pajama-style top, hair pulled back in a low bun, ornate chandelier casually twinkling behind her. "As someone who can't write, I admire those who have that skill." The thousands of miles between her chic Paris hotel room and my apartment in California weren't enough to dull my shock. Venus Williams had just thrown me off my game and we weren't even on a court. Still, I felt it again: empowered. Here was one of the world's greatest athletes going out of her way to acknowledge the singular thing I do better than she does—the thing that I, too, had to work twice as hard on to meet her at this moment. Of course, I'm guessing that was her point.

Venus Ebony Starr Williams is the epitome of "twice as good." Hell, she's twice as good squared. Just look at the material: At 41, she's now the inverse of the age she was when she first went pro. That's almost three decades of excellence. She's the first Black woman in the Open era to be ranked the number one female tennis player in the world; she's won a combined 21 Grand Slam championships and 4 Olympic gold medals. She also, somehow, found the time to get two degrees (in fashion design and business administration) and launch three companies (more on those later). It's the kind of résumé that would be impressive for any athlete, but it says even more for a Black female athlete. Let's take, for example, this incomplete list of things Black female athletes dealt with this year alone, in "progressive" 2021, leading up to the Olympics: suspension due to antiquated and racist drug policies (Sha'Carri Richardson), suspension due to natural testosterone levels (Christine Mboma, Beatrice Masilingi), a ban on swimming caps made for natural Black hair, and gymnastics scoring standards that don't fully reward power and risk (Simone Biles). Beyond the Olympics, there's also the issue that led to Venus's viral comment: fellow tennis champion Naomi Osaka withdrawing from the French Open because of the impact that mandatory post-match press conferences were having on her mental health.

Venus gets it, clearly, and she's watching the way these athletes fight back with a kind of big-sister pride. "I admire everyone who stands up for what is right, which isn't easy," she says of Naomi and her peers. "It takes strength, courage, and vulnerability.

"IT'S NOT
**ABOUT THE MONEY,**
BUT IT *IS* ABOUT THE
MONEY, RIGHT?"

> **“I LIKE MY LIFE AND I DON’T WANT TO CHANGE IT FOR ANY REASON.”**

I love to see this next generation of players be willing and open to do that regardless of the cost to them.” What she doesn’t say—but I will—is that many in this next generation might not even be here at all if it weren’t for Venus and her sister Serena.

I remember when the Williams sisters emerged Straight Outta Compton in the late ’90s, with their beautiful deep-dark skin and perfectly beaded braids. They looked like girls I saw in my daily life but never on national television—and never playing a sport so often associated with white wealth. Watching them make it to the national stage and then beat everyone in sight felt like I was bearing witness to a level of audacity that I didn’t know was allowed to come from young women who looked like me. Their dominance felt brave and radical, like each winning serve was smashing a neon ball through a glass ceiling. For Black girls, watching them play made us feel like magic long before anyone was calling us that.

“I didn’t see myself as different. I saw myself as a great player,” Venus says now, reflecting on the magnitude of her impact. “I thought I was better, that I could win.” Still, her parents did warn her that people would see her as different—to be ready and to remember who she was in spite of it. That’s a famed accomplishment unto itself, so much so that it’s making its way to the big screen in November. *King Richard* stars Will Smith as Venus’s father and Aunjanue Ellis as her mother, and it depicts their dedication to raising Venus as a champion with integrity who could pave the way for her little sister. They’re one of the many reasons she’s such an unflappable warrior on the court. “We’re like gladiators out there, literally,” she says. “You go out there with your lance and it’s just you.” And as she went from rookie to seasoned champ, she also learned how to cope with the pressure of being a world-famous athlete.

“As you grow up and mature, you realize you don’t have to be in any situation you find disrespectful,” she explains. “You can let people know what you find disrespectful.” We lock eyes on the latter point. There’s a fine line between demanding respect and being labeled an angry Black woman, so it doesn’t surprise me when she continues: “It doesn’t have to be yelling or screaming. I’m not a combative person. I’m never going to let any situation change that, because I want to look back and know that I stayed true to who I am. So come. Come for me if you want to, but you won’t come again.”

We decide right then and there that Venus’s last sentence would be her tagline if she were ever a Bravo Housewife. Then there’s a knock at her door: It’s someone dropping off her Havanese, Harold Reginald Williams, who Venus says she got impulsively 14 years ago. Her face lights up as

CHRISTIAN DIOR
PARIS

she greets him—"Oh, it's Harry! Hello, son!"—and the dog bursts into view like a floppy-eared lightning bolt. "It's going to be like that again?" asks Venus, as she tries to scoop him up. "I have to give him his cookie or else he'll bother me."

Our interview is punctuated by a few more interruptions, but they never break Venus's train of thought—sis is a pro at juggling. Her parents also encouraged her to pursue passions outside of tennis, and at any given moment, she may be weighing in on creative for her interior design firm, V Starr, which has quietly established itself in the real estate market with luxury private residence projects (including Serena's home, which was featured in *Architectural Digest*), or taking calls for her fashion and lifestyle brand, EleVen. She also holds a minority stake ownership in the Miami Dolphins, created the vegan protein company Happy Viking, and has partnerships with Credo Beauty and Asutra. (All this, by the way, made her an obvious fit to join the judging panel of *Cosmo*'s The New C-Suite, a spotlight on the year's most impressive women entrepreneurs of color—check it out just a few pages ahead.)

And even that's not all Venus does: In March, she launched the privilege tax initiative, which calls on companies to include an option at checkout for customers to donate 19 cents (the difference in earnings per dollar between women

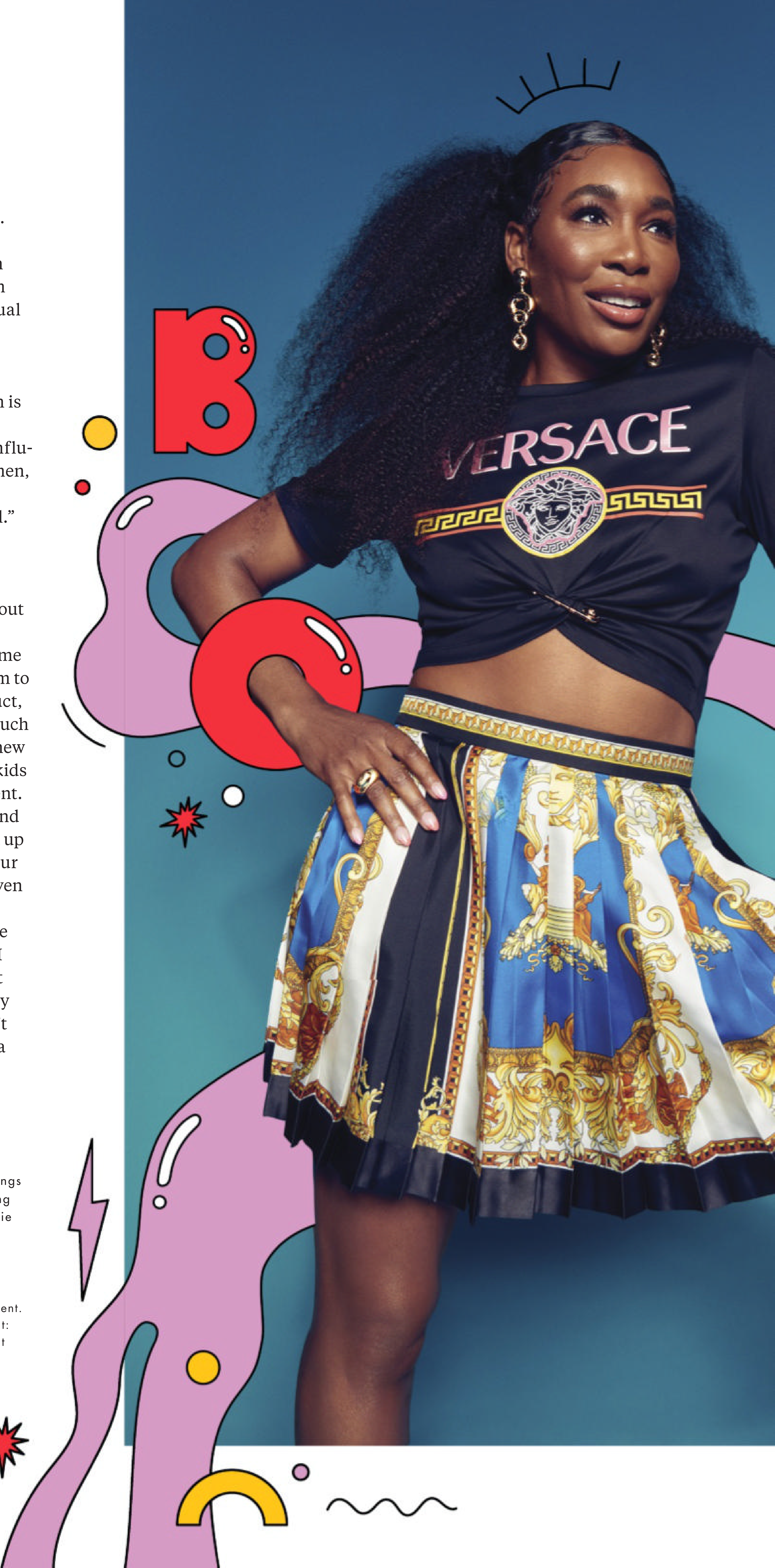
▼

Burberry top, saksfifthavenue.com. Journelle bralette. Dior visor. Sara Robertsson earrings. Jennifer Fisher ring.

and men) for every purchase made. Consider it an extension of what Venus did in the mid-aughts, when she successfully advocated for men and women in tennis to receive equal prize money. “It’s not about the money, but it *is* about the money, right?” she says. “Those who have money have power. When a woman is in power—when she has finances, equal opportunity—she’s able to influence her life, the lives of other women, and the lives of her family in a way that allows her to be free and equal.”

Venus’s success also gives her space to tap into some more lighthearted obsessions. Skincare, for example, is very much her jam. About 30 minutes into our interview, she hops up with her laptop and takes me into the bathroom of her hotel room to show off her current favorite product, Nu Skin LumiSpa. She loves it so much that she made her coach pick up a new one when he went home to see his kids for a few days during the tournament. “I’ve had to find ways to exfoliate and turn over skin,” she says, holding it up for proper viewing. “This makes your skin like porcelain and you don’t even need to use it every day.”

Given that she’s a woman whose life is full of disciplined routines, I guess I shouldn’t be surprised that Venus isn’t the “splash water on my face and go” type. But what I didn’t realize is that I’d be ready to start a



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Versace T-shirt, shopbop.com. Versace skirt, mytheresa.com. Paula Mendoza earrings and ring (right). Ariana Boussard-Reifel ring (left). Jennifer Fisher bracelet (gold). Aurélie Bidermann bracelets (ivory and navy).

Hair: Angela Meadows. Makeup: Natasha Gross at NatashaGrossArtistry.com. Manicure: Andrea Viera at Creative Management. Tailor: Cynthia CrusanNoble. Fashion assistant: Britney Diaz. Production: Howard Goldmann at HG Producers.

FOR SHOPPING INFORMATION, GO TO COSMOPOLITAN.COM.

> "I SAW MYSELF AS **A GREAT PLAYER.** I THOUGHT I WAS BETTER, THAT I COULD WIN."

petition for her to create a YouTube page by the time she was done walking me through her regimen. From the products she uses to control her acne (Replenix Acne Wash, benzoyl peroxide, tea tree oil, milk cleanser) to the products she's created to protect her skin from the sun (EleVen's sun serum and SPF) to...well, it's clear that Venus is also (yes, *also*) a full-fledged beauty influencer in waiting. By the time she casually reveals that she makes personalized concoctions for her friends and family using oils she buys during her travels, I am truly ready to Like, subscribe, share, and leave a comment.

But alas, Venus is more interested these days in taking care of those friends and family—and, of course, Harry and herself. Our interview happens just a few days shy of her 41st birthday, and as a Jehovah's Witness, she won't celebrate it, but she will take some time to reflect. As she goes into another year, she says she is very much in love with the freedom her life allows her and doesn't feel influenced by the societal pressures that often tell women we need to settle down and start a family.

"I have a lot of friends who don't believe me when I say that I like my life and I don't want to change it for any reason. I'm not desperate and they don't believe me," she says, with a slight chuckle, about being single. "They say things like, 'You're going to miss your window.' I'm like, 'Please, relax. You might feel this way, but I don't. I promise you I don't.'"

It's obvious that this sort of contentment is worth more to her than a diamond, especially when she can just buy one herself. And especially because Venus has worked twice as hard for her off-the-court life too—giving us another type of representation we don't often get to see. "There's this sort of quiet resistance that Venus always carries herself with," says journalist and podcast host Jemele Hill. "She's chosen to live her life so unapologetically and I think there's a beauty in that. Especially when you think about these narratives about how Black women are desperate or lonely or how after a certain age, something is wrong with you if you aren't getting married or having kids. The joy that she has both on the court and off it is kind of an indirect retaliation to that narrative. She just seems like somebody who's just not pressed. I love that about her."

After spending a couple of hours with Venus, I can confirm that the only thing about her that's pressed is her hair. The truth is that right now, in this moment, Venus is feeling good. Really good. And after all the work she's put in, and a year like this past one, that should absolutely be added to her very long list of wins.

# This is the new

# C suite

**Our inaugural class of female entrepreneurs of color is changing the way the corner office looks, feels, and operates. It's about damn time.**

▼

Words by
**JESSICA GOODMAN**

**Here's a trash stat:** In 2020, a year of record-setting venture-capital investment, Black- and Latinx-women-founded start-ups got *less than half of 1 percent* of funding. So yes, it is exponentially harder for women of color to launch companies—and yet they do. There are thousands each year who choose not to be daunted or discouraged, and thanks to them, the face of American business is changing for the better. But it's time for more. That's why *Cosmo* has partnered with digitalundivided (a nonprofit social start-up that leverages data, advocacy, programming, and more to catalyze growth for Black and Latinx women) on an annual initiative to shine a light on and support women of color entrepreneurs. Our first group of honorees—who, along with hundreds of others, submitted applications that were vetted over a monthslong process—have found success that, we hope, is inspiring to anyone who's doubting their own. Meet the bosses you want to work for—and become.

## Crystal Etienne

**HER BUSINESS:** Ruby Love, which makes leakproof swimwear and underwear

**HER BRAGGING RIGHTS:** Just five years after launching, the business boasts $50 million in revenue.

**LOCATION:** Farmingdale, NY

**MY MOTTO**

**"Don't stop until you get it done."**

**HOW IT STARTED:** "This company was born out of frustration. I couldn't wear tampons because I was diagnosed with PCOS," says Crystal. She was working in the auto industry and had no experience in clothing but wanted a solution. So in 2015, she "didn't think twice" about taking a risk.

**HOW IT'S GOING:** Ruby Love was the first company to make period swimwear, earning a lot of consumer loyalty. "The pandemic allowed me to sit back and realize what I've done," says Crystal. "I'm really proud."

**WHY I DO IT:** "A lot of Black women reach out to me for advice. There were so many obstacles I could have avoided. My goal is to help others."

## Sophia Strother

**HER BUSINESS:** L2E Industries, a courier company that delivers packages to Amazon customers

**HER BRAGGING RIGHTS:** "I'm the only Black human-trafficking survivor to own a business that has a national contract with Amazon," says Sophia.

**LOCATION:** Hutto, TX

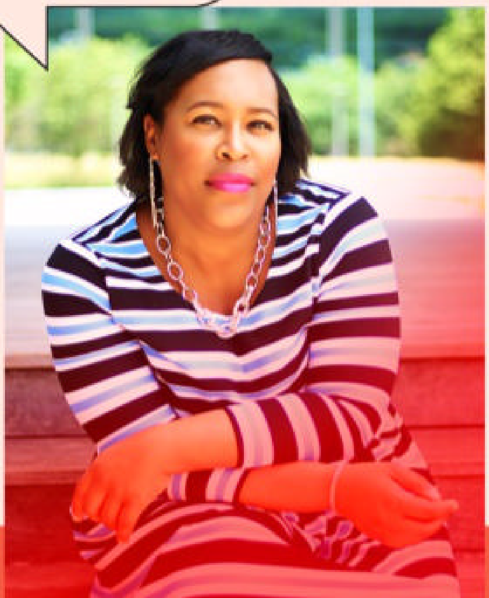
**HOW IT STARTED:** "As a survivor of human trafficking and sexual assault, I used some of the anger about what had transpired against me to propel me," says Sophia. "That's what gave me the confidence and healing to start this company."

**HOW IT'S GOING:** Sophia's using her profits and success to launch a medical clinic that will focus on getting vaccines to Black and brown communities in rural areas. "I could never have seen myself coming out of my upbringing doing this," she says. "It's fulfilling."

**WHY I DO IT:** "There aren't a lot of business mentors standing by in our community. This field has fewer than 2 percent Black women owners. I try to change that dynamic."

**MY MOTTO**

**"My passion wakes me up."**



**OUR MOTTO**

**"You cannot give up."**

## Jonelie Vélez-Román + Ailed González-Quintana

**THEIR BUSINESS:** TastySmart, which makes gluten-free, plant-based snack foods

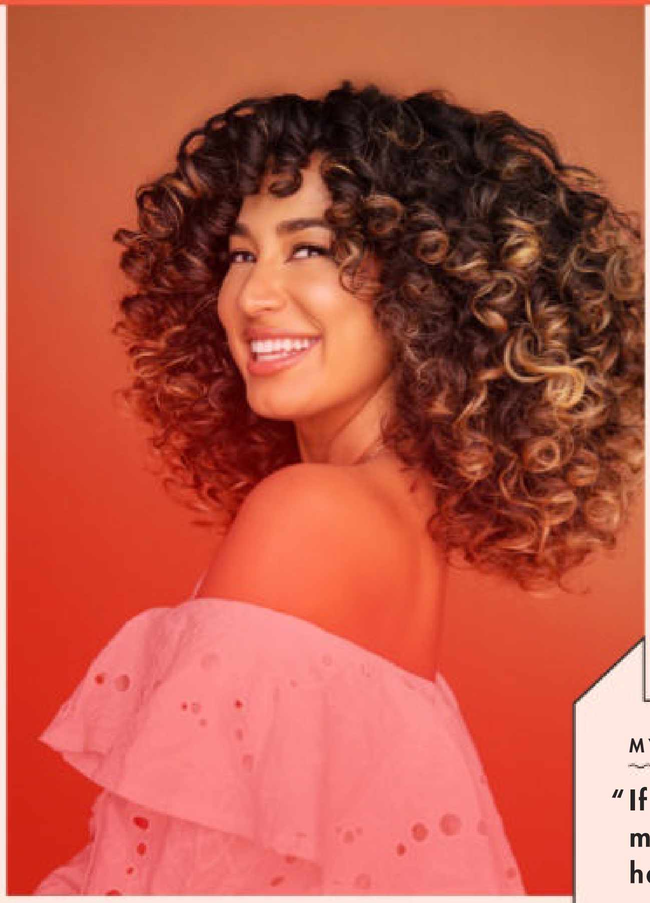
**THEIR BRAGGING RIGHTS:** They've been selling A LOT of cookies since 2019. "We finally did our first export to the U.S. and are now in 28 stores in South Florida," says Jonelie.

**LOCATION:** Vega Baja, Puerto Rico

**HOW IT STARTED:** In 2017, after working in Coca-Cola's marketing division, Jonelie contacted her old friend Ailed, who has celiac disease and had been baking her own gluten-free cookies. Jonelie proposed the two go into business and produce Ailed's creations widely.

**HOW IT'S GOING:** Friends and fam were shocked they decided to "make cookies," says Jonelie. But customers are obsessed: "People tell us, 'This doesn't taste gluten-free or plant-based. It's just a delicious cookie.'"

**WHY WE DO IT:** "I don't have many female role models. I want to be one for others," says Jonelie. Ailed agrees: "We want to let other women know it's possible."



**MY MOTTO**

**"If it doesn't make me happy, it's not worth it."**

## Julissa Prado

**HER BUSINESS:** Rizos Curls, a textured haircare line

**HER BRAGGING RIGHTS:** "We launched the Latina haircare category for Target and sold out that very first weekend," says Julissa.

**LOCATION:** Los Angeles, CA

**HOW IT STARTED:** Julissa got her first taste of running a business at her father's restaurant in L.A. when she was a teen. But she always gravitated toward hair, even when she was getting her master's degree in business management. "I was the person doing girls' hair at quinceañeras," she says. After saving money while working for big companies like Nestlé and PepsiCo, she self-funded her line and relied on social media to spread the word and on her family for help: "Our headquarters was my Tio Juan's garage. My cousin Vanessa drew the label."

**HOW IT'S GOING:** Rizos Curls is now available at Ulta Beauty too. "We keep entering spaces where we are the first to be self-funded and Latino-owned."

**WHY I DO IT:** "Customers are demanding diversity in front of and behind the scenes. It would be a disservice if I'm the first and the last founder like me. I need to leave the door open for so many others."

## WANNA BE A CEO?

Steal these career hacks and don't look back.

### FOR PRODUCTIVITY

"Use 'focus mode' on your phone."
—VS

"I set time on my calendar for actual tasks."
—FT

"It sounds crazy, but I take vacations. I've been more productive since I have learned to have true balance."
—SS

"Focus on three things at a time."
—KJ

"Say no."
—CE

"Keep track of everything in a notes app."
—DM

"I always have a day when I have no meetings."
—TT

### FOR STAYING SANE

"I have a good-faith creed: If today wasn't a good day, tomorrow might be."
—SS

"Get fresh air outside."
—JP

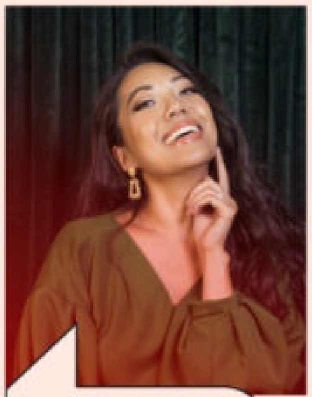
"Massages."
—JV-R

"Cooking, yoga, and spending time with family."
—AG-Q

"I have ADHD and can't sit still for that long. But meditation helps."
—MD

"I have a whole accountability circle. Many of them are other founders. Every day, I send a text saying what I'm grateful for."
—DM

## Frances Tang



**MY MOTTO**

**"If we wait till we're ready, we'll be waiting the rest of our lives."**

**HER BUSINESS:** Personal-hygiene company Awkward Essentials, which makes Dripstick, a device that soaks up fluids after sex

**HER BRAGGING RIGHTS:** Dripstick went fully viral last year. "We had a TikTok with 17 million views," Frances says.

**LOCATION:** Orange County, CA

**HOW IT STARTED:** "Every time I had sex, I didn't like the cleanup," says Frances. "I got the idea for Dripstick while baking and wiping the bowl with a spatula—like, *Oh my god, I wish I had a spatula for my vagina!* I wanted to solve this problem for others. I ordered 20,000 units of product and threw together a website."

**HOW IT'S GOING:** "Our sales have been growing 20 to 30 percent month over month," says Frances. Dripstick also has Big Deal advisers like sex-tech star Cindy Gallop.

**WHY I DO IT:** "Female founders are the only ones who can solve our own problems. I want to encourage other women to just do the thing."

OPENING SPREAD: FIRST ROW, FROM LEFT: KRISTINA BAKREVSKI SHOT FOR THE FUTURE IS FLOWER; JESSICA CZARNECKI. SECOND ROW: STEPHANIE FRIDAY; COURTESY L2E INDUSTRIES; DESIRÉE LOWRY STYLE STUDIO. THIRD ROW: DAVID AVALOS; COURTESY NEURO REHAB VR. FOURTH ROW: CECE ESPEUT PHOTOGRAPHY; COURTESY RUBY LOVE; JONATHAN ADJAHOE. THIS SPREAD: DESIRÉE LOWRY STYLE STUDIO (VÉLEZ-ROMÁN AND GONZÁLEZ-QUINTANA); JESSICA CZARNECKI (TANG); COURTESY L2E INDUSTRIES (STROTHER); DAVID AVALOS (PRADO); PAVEL DENISENKO (ETIENNE).

# Dorian Morris

**HER BUSINESS:** UnDefined Beauty, a wellness and beauty company specializing in affordable, holistic self-care, adaptogen, and CBD products

**HER BRAGGING RIGHTS:** Those products can now be found in Whole Foods nationwide.

**MY MOTTO**

**"Closed mouths don't get fed."**

**LOCATION:** San Francisco, CA

**HOW IT STARTED:** After going to Harvard Business School and working at beauty brands, Dorian wanted to build something. Her goal? A high-quality, accessibly priced wellness line that celebrated diversity: "The brand is clean, conscious, inclusive plant magic."

**HOW IT'S GOING:** Dorian was one of a few founders chosen to participate in Target's Takeoff Beauty Accelerator program. "All these milestones reinforce the benefits of inclusivity," she says.

**WHY I DO IT:** "Wellness has had one face: the girl who's skinny, affluent, white. But we all deserve access to it. I want to bring in people who've been excluded."

# Veena Somareddy

**HER BUSINESS:** Neuro Rehab VR, which develops virtual reality therapy exercises for neurological rehab

**MY MOTTO**

**"You can't be perfect all the time."**

**HER BRAGGING RIGHTS:** "We've been approved by the FDA, which is a huge milestone," says Veena.

**LOCATION:** Fort Worth, TX

**HOW IT STARTED:** "I'm from Bangalore, India, and I came to the U.S. in 2012 to work on my master's degree in game design and development," she says. After meeting her cofounder, who ran a neurological recovery center, Veena learned about how VR can help with physical and cognitive therapy. She started working with patients and saw VR's very real benefits.

**HOW IT'S GOING:** "We've raised about $2.8 million," she says. "And we've been able to reach more than 350 patients with thousands of sessions."

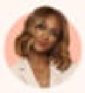
**WHY I DO IT:** "I've been dismissed so many times because of the way I look. I want to show that CEOs don't always have to be white men."

## THE BEST + WORST ADVICE I EVER GOT

| BEST | WORST |
|---|---|
| "Think bigger." —VS | "Bring in a very senior person." —VS |
| "Don't lose focus." —JV-R | "Play it safe." —JV-R |
| "Carve out time to be introspective." —MD | "Don't prioritize menopause." —MD |
| "You could plan for forever or you could take action and do the thing." —FT | "Use data to inform every single decision." —FT |
| "Take the plunge. You're worth it." —SS | "Sit down and wait your turn." —SS |
| "Being small can be an advantage." —JP | "Take investment right away." —JP |
| "Learn what your investors or advisers are looking for early on." —KJ | "Wait until you're ready." —KJ |
| "Be your own customer. If you don't like it, don't sell it." —CE | "Get a cofounder." —CE |
| "Lean into calculated risk." —DM | "Change your company's name." —DM |
| "Stay true to your north star." —TT | "Stay in your lane." —TT |

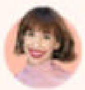
### THE JUDGES WHO CHOSE THESE BADASS BOSSES

**VENUS WILLIAMS**
Grand Slam singles champion and founder of EleVen



**LAUREN MAILLIAN**
CEO of digitalundivided

**ELAN NIEVES**
Board Chair, digitalundivided



**JESSICA PELS**
Editor-in-Chief of *Cosmopolitan*

**JULEE WILSON**
Beauty Director of *Cosmopolitan*

## Tolonda Tolbert

**MY MOTTO**

**"I'm worthy."**

**HER BUSINESS:** Eskalera, an HR technology company focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion education

**HER BRAGGING RIGHTS:** Eskalera has an all-star list of clients, like heavy hitters in the financial services and health care industries and the Ivy League.

**LOCATION:** San Francisco, CA

**HOW IT STARTED:** After getting a PhD in comparative literature and women's studies, Tolonda spent 22 years working in human resources. "I wanted to help people with real issues, not theoretical ones," she says. But she felt the industry lacked the technology to actually show companies that DEI initiatives are worthwhile. That's why she launched Eskalera: "We needed to have numbers behind inequity so that people would take it as seriously as they do any other kind of business problem."

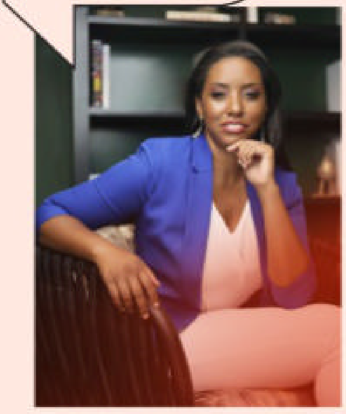
**HOW IT'S GOING:** Last year, Eskalera created an Inclusion Index that companies can use to easily score their corporate culture and see where they have room to grow.

**WHY I DO IT:** "When you make things inclusive, it works better for everybody."

## Kristina Jones

**MY MOTTO**

**"Go big or go home."**



**HER BUSINESS:** Guardian Lane, a mental health platform for children battling grief

**HER BRAGGING RIGHTS:** She became the 14th Black woman to raise more than $1 million from VCs with her first start-up, the tech firm Lawchamps.

**LOCATION:** Los Angeles, CA

**HOW IT STARTED:** After finding success in tech, Kristina wrote a children's book based on her experience of losing her father to cancer when she was 7. "I never got the help I needed to process his death," she says. It inspired her to launch Guardian Lane, where kids access counselor-approved activities and videos that help them process grief.

**HOW IT'S GOING:** Guardian Lane now partners with 1,300 schools across the country to provide students with access to grief resources.

**WHY I DO IT:** "Women of color are often thought of last when it comes to entrepreneurship. In our communities, raising money isn't talked about. We went in there blind, stumbling our way through. If I had known the metrics that investors wanted up front, it would have saved us so many rejections. Being able to share that information with other women is so helpful."

## Markea + Debbie Dickinson

**THEIR BUSINESS:** Thermaband, a wearable heating and cooling device that helps menopausal people deal with hot flashes

**THEIR BRAGGING RIGHTS:** They got accepted to the very exclusive Google for Startups Founders Academy.

**LOCATION:** Miami, FL

**HOW IT STARTED:** "My mom, Debbie, is a Harvard Law benefits attorney—she was worried about ageism and sexism in the workplace because she was navigating menopause and hot flashes," says Markea. There was nothing subtle on the market. "It didn't make sense. Why weren't there better solutions for how to navigate these things? I have a background in corporate supply chains, so we just went for it."

**HOW IT'S GOING:** "At first, it was so hard to convince male investors this product was necessary," says Markea. "But we raised over half a million dollars, have ordered 1,000 units, and are almost finished with our beta testing."

**WHY WE DO IT:** "You can't underestimate the importance of your network," says Markea. "I spend so much time in my head, and it's helpful for me to be part of these communities that empower women."

**OUR MOTTO**

**"One closed door could lead to other open doors."**

KRISTINA BAKREVSKI SHOT FOR THE FUTURE IS FLOWER (MORRIS); JAKE DEAN/*DALLAS BUSINESS JOURNAL* (SOMAREDDY); GETTY IMAGES (WILLIAMS); ALLIE HOLLOWAY (PELS); COLLETTE BONAPARTE (MAILLIAN, NIEVES); STEPHANIE FRIDAY (TOLBERT); JONATHAN ADJAHOE (JONES); CECE ESPEUT PHOTOGRAPHY (MARKEA AND DEBBIE DICKINSON).

# Out

# erwear

Bundle all the way up à la singer-songwriter Allison Ponthier in fall/winter '21's chicest cold-weather trends.

Photographs by SARAI MARI

Fashion by CASSIE ANDERSON

Words by RACHEL TORGERSON

**SO SWADDLED**

Make like an actual baby and bask in the safety and security of being enveloped by the softest, coziest, prettiest-hued chonky scarf.

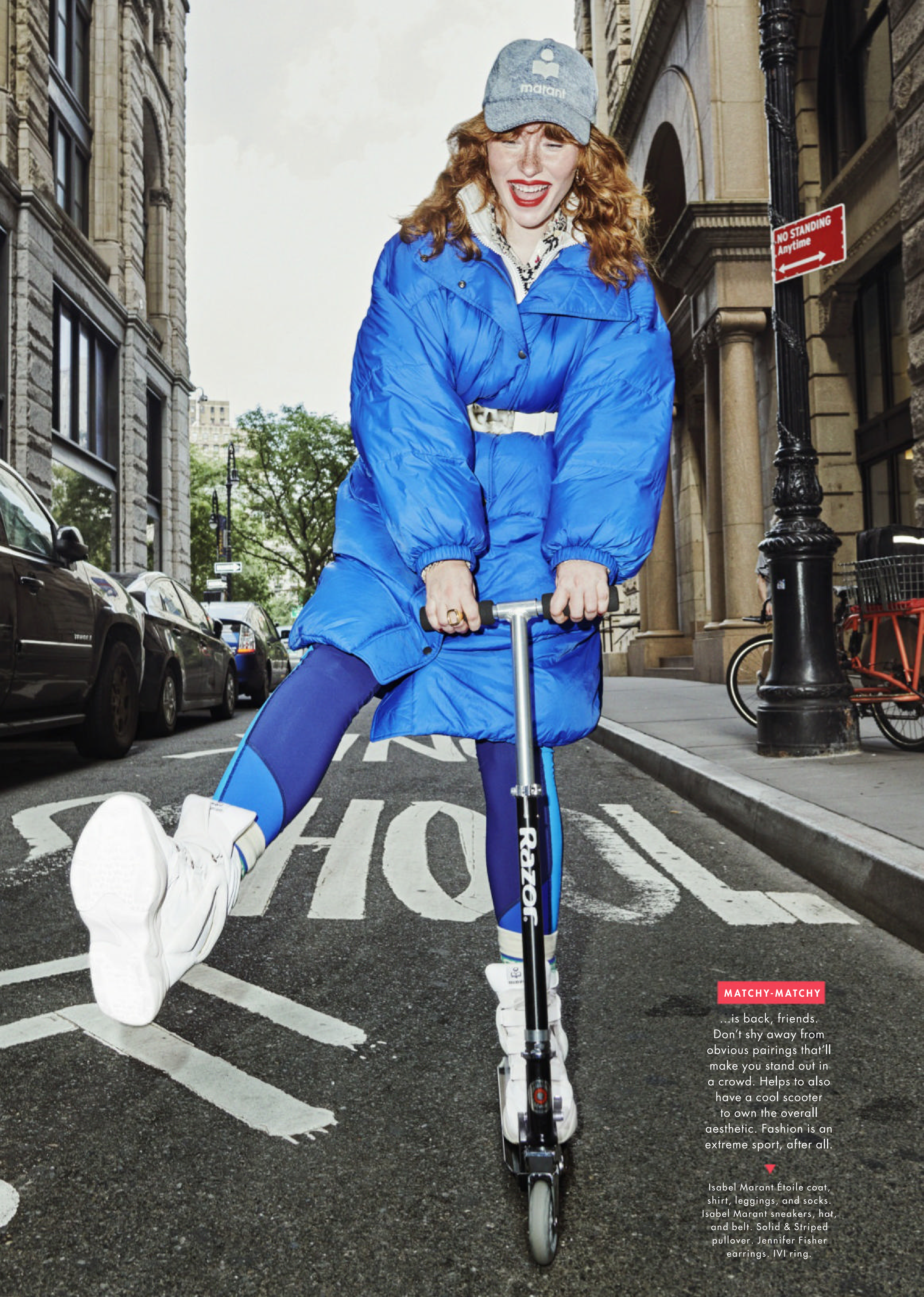
▼

Christian Wijnants coat and scarf. '47 Brand hat. Jennifer Fisher earrings.

**EXTRA BOLD**

A super-pro tip for ya is that wearing a statement coat over a caj pair of sweats automatically dresses them up. And yes, my mom needs to hear this and really take it in this time. They're *not* pajamas!

R13 coat and T-shirt. Cotton Citizen sweatshirt. Les Tien sweatpants. Jungmaven socks. Stella McCartney sneakers. Lagos earrings.



## MATCHY-MATCHY

…is back, friends. Don't shy away from obvious pairings that'll make you stand out in a crowd. Helps to also have a cool scooter to own the overall aesthetic. Fashion is an extreme sport, after all.

Isabel Marant Étoile coat, shirt, leggings, and socks. Isabel Marant sneakers, hat, and belt. Solid & Striped pullover. Jennifer Fisher earrings. IVI ring.

## TUNES FOR YOU

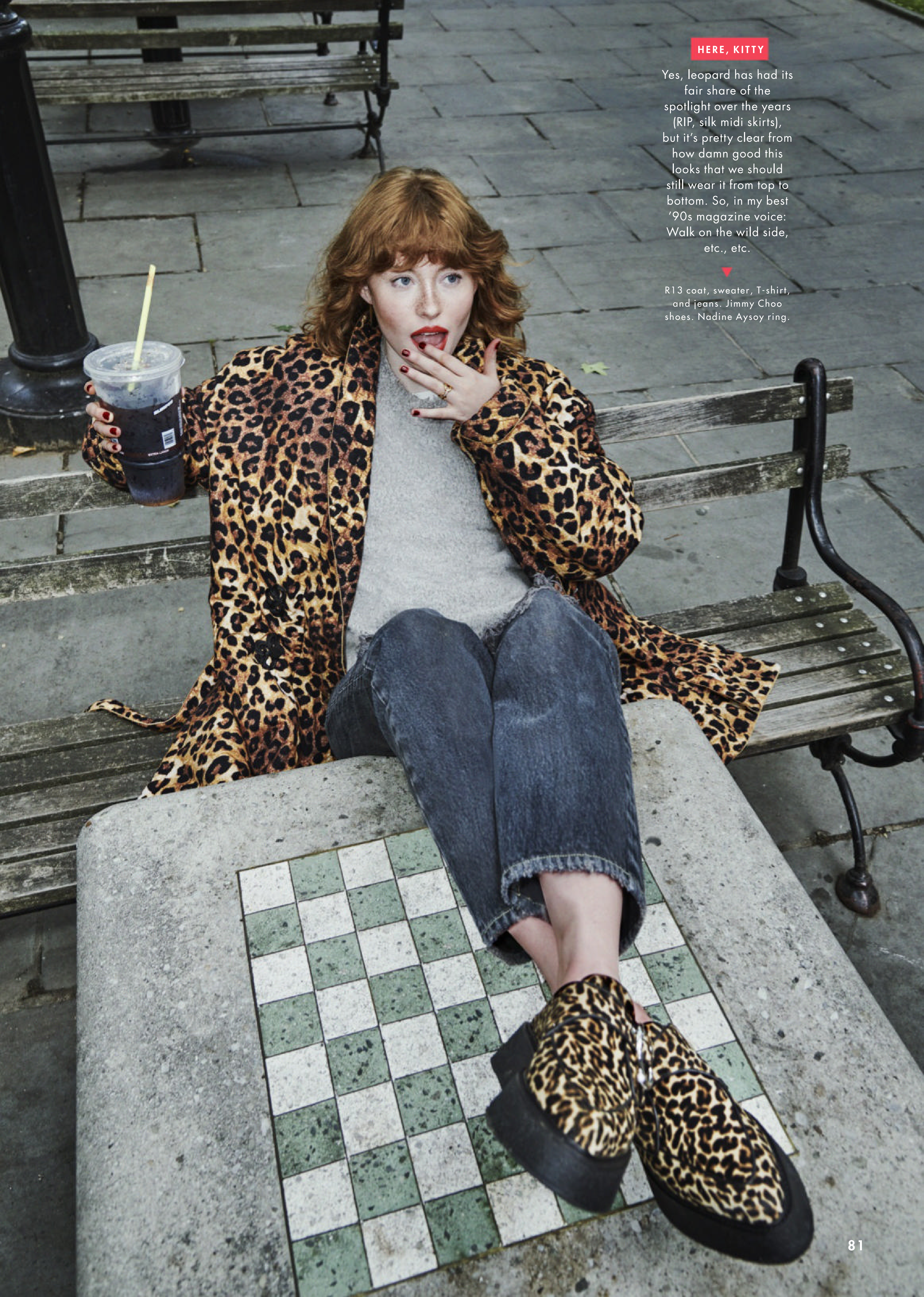
Hi, your (physical or mental) commute needs Allison Ponthier's tracks to get you extremely up in your country-meets-city feels. The model-turned-musician's debut EP, *Faking My Own Death*, is out now, and moody bop "Cowboy" is worthy of playing on repeat.

**HANDS! FREE!**

Some common probs: You wanna wear the marshmallow trend but you also want to have a waist. And you need to have a bag but your tiny shoulder-strap just isn't cute when it bunches up your bulky jacket. May I present the perfect solution? (Aka the sporty belt bag below.)

Br lyn Bridge
Ci all Station
4 J Z
E
C 4 5 6 J Z at
hambers Streets

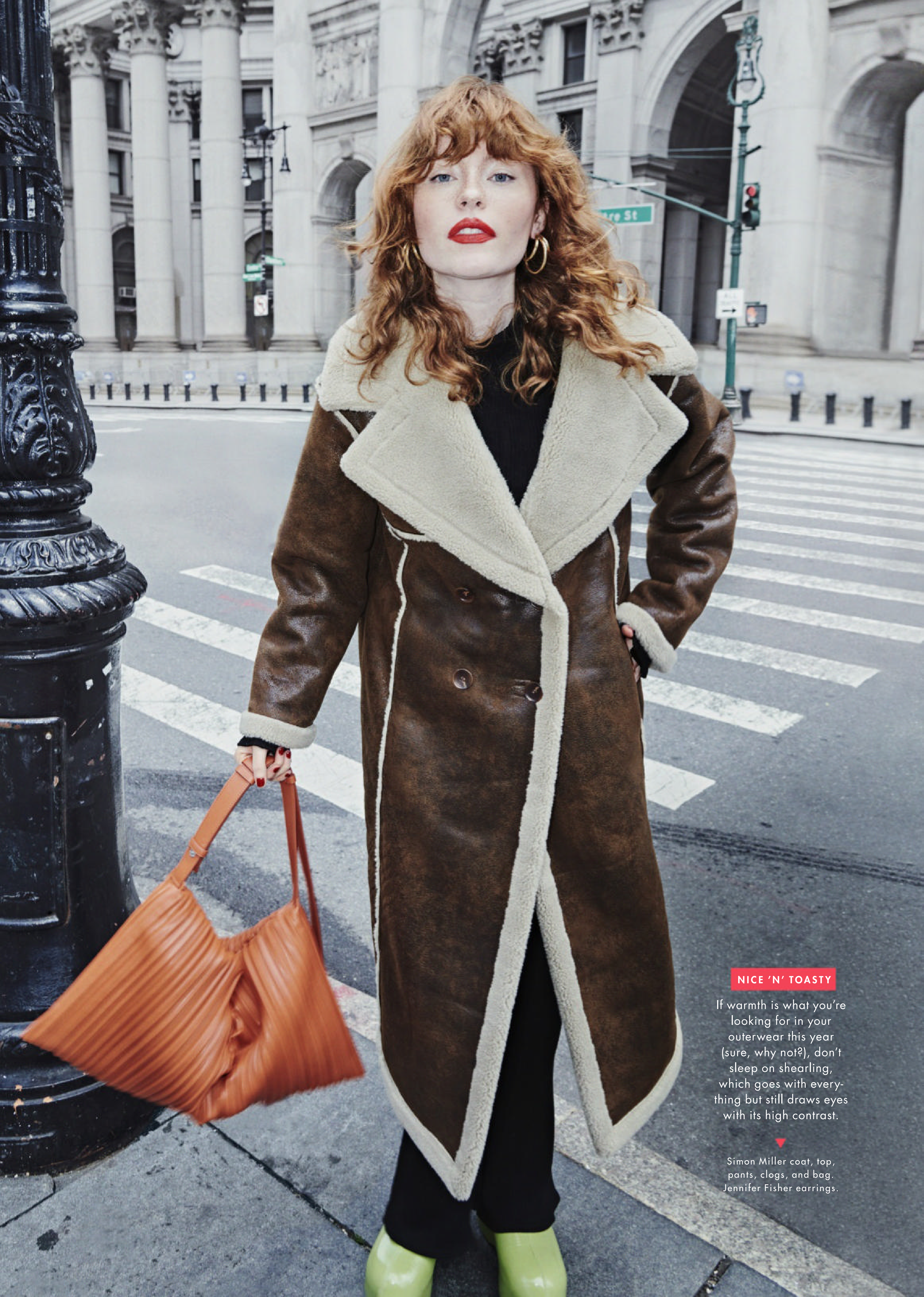
Daily Paper puffer. Joanna Laura Constantine earrings. Prada belt bag.



**HERE, KITTY**

Yes, leopard has had its fair share of the spotlight over the years (RIP, silk midi skirts), but it's pretty clear from how damn good this looks that we should still wear it from top to bottom. So, in my best '90s magazine voice: Walk on the wild side, etc., etc.

R13 coat, sweater, T-shirt, and jeans. Jimmy Choo shoes. Nadine Aysoy ring.

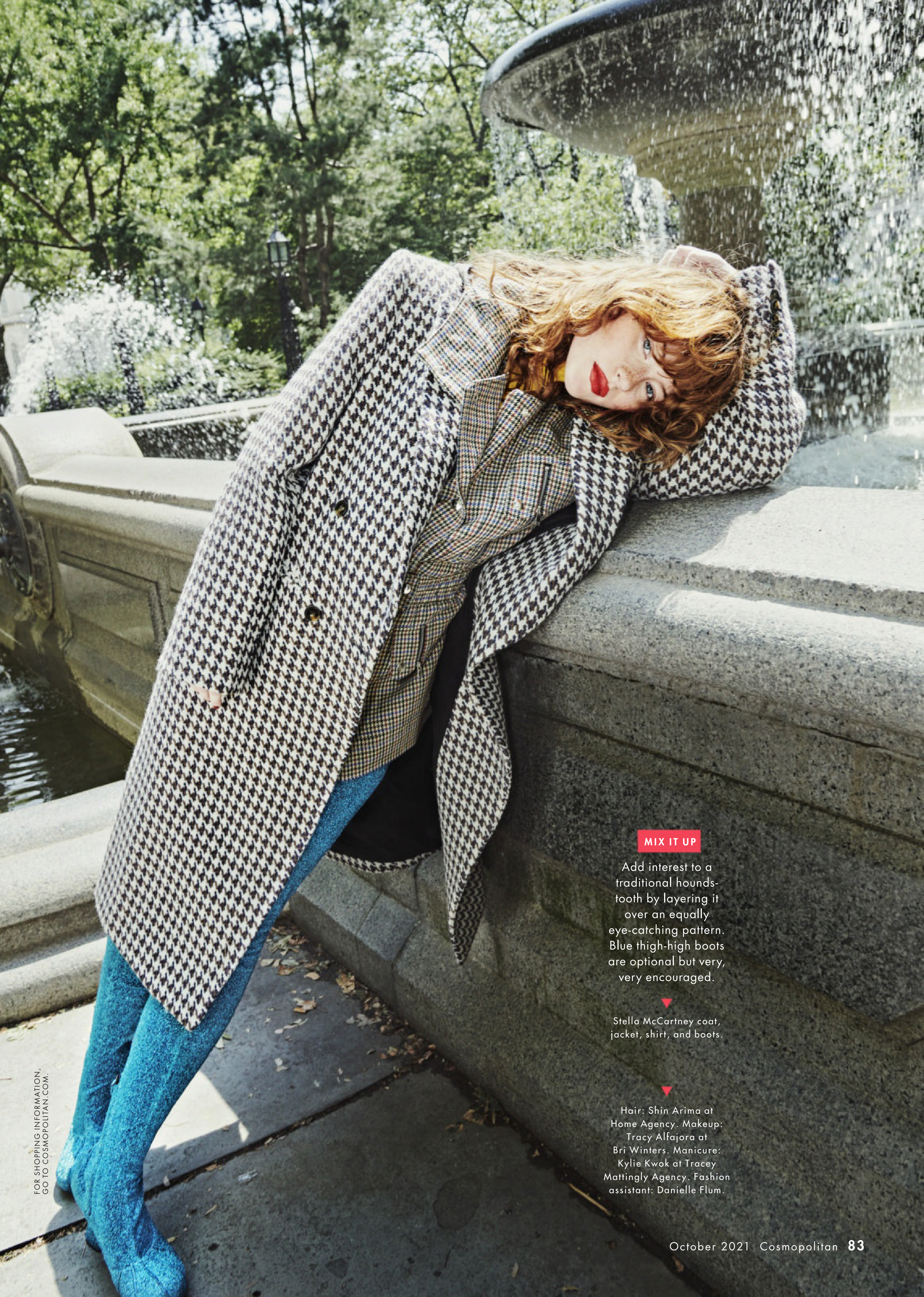


**NICE 'N' TOASTY**

If warmth is what you're looking for in your outerwear this year (sure, why not?), don't sleep on shearling, which goes with everything but still draws eyes with its high contrast.

▼

Simon Miller coat, top, pants, clogs, and bag. Jennifer Fisher earrings.



FOR SHOPPING INFORMATION, GO TO COSMOPOLITAN.COM.

**MIX IT UP**

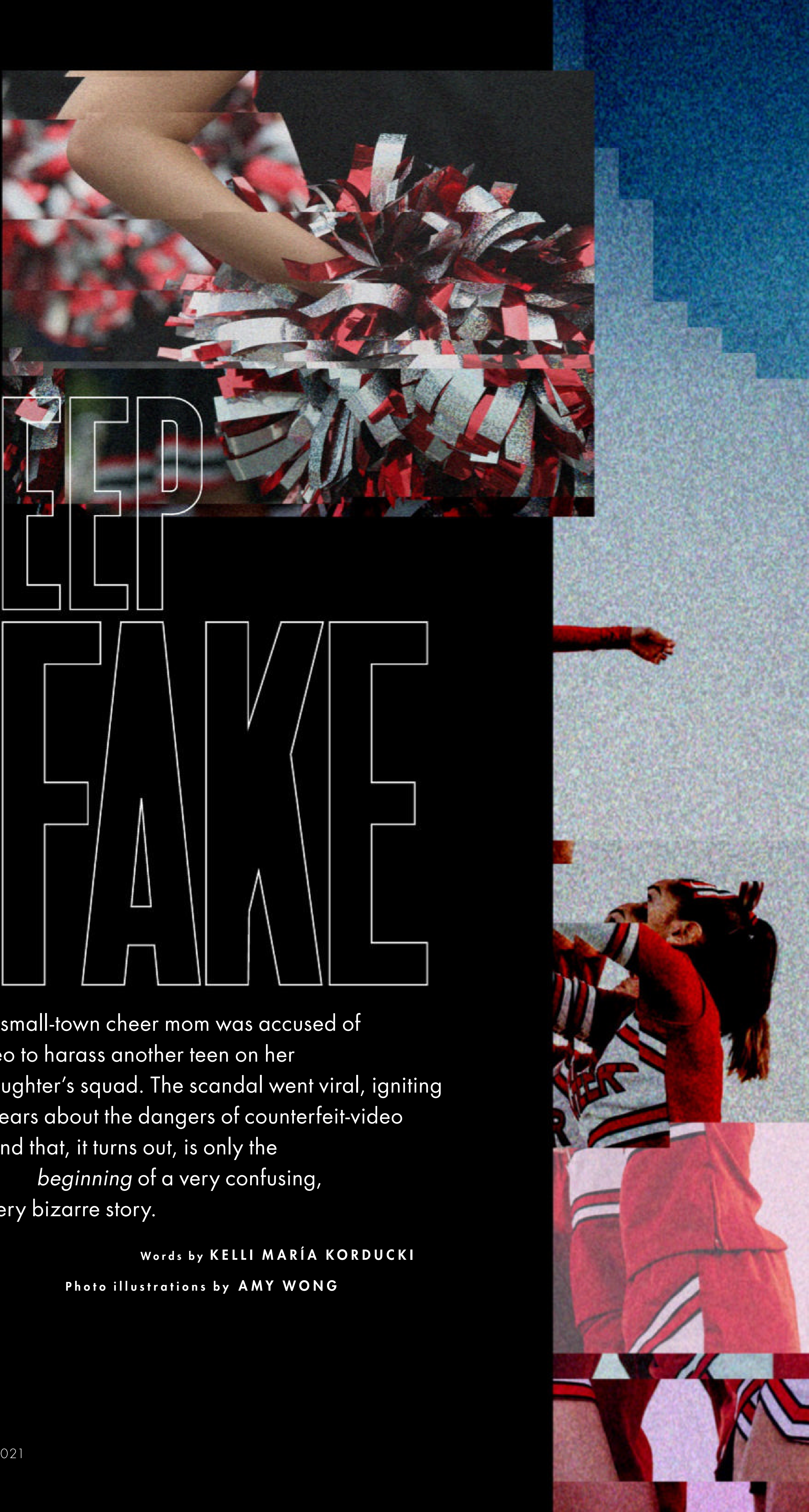
Add interest to a traditional houndstooth by layering it over an equally eye-catching pattern. Blue thigh-high boots are optional but very, very encouraged.

▼

Stella McCartney coat, jacket, shirt, and boots.

▼

Hair: Shin Arima at Home Agency. Makeup: Tracy Alfajora at Bri Winters. Manicure: Kylie Kwok at Tracey Mattingly Agency. Fashion assistant: Danielle Flum.

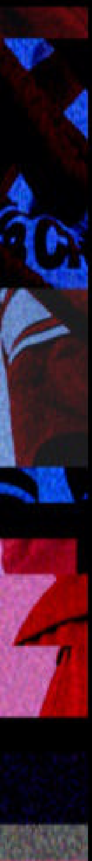


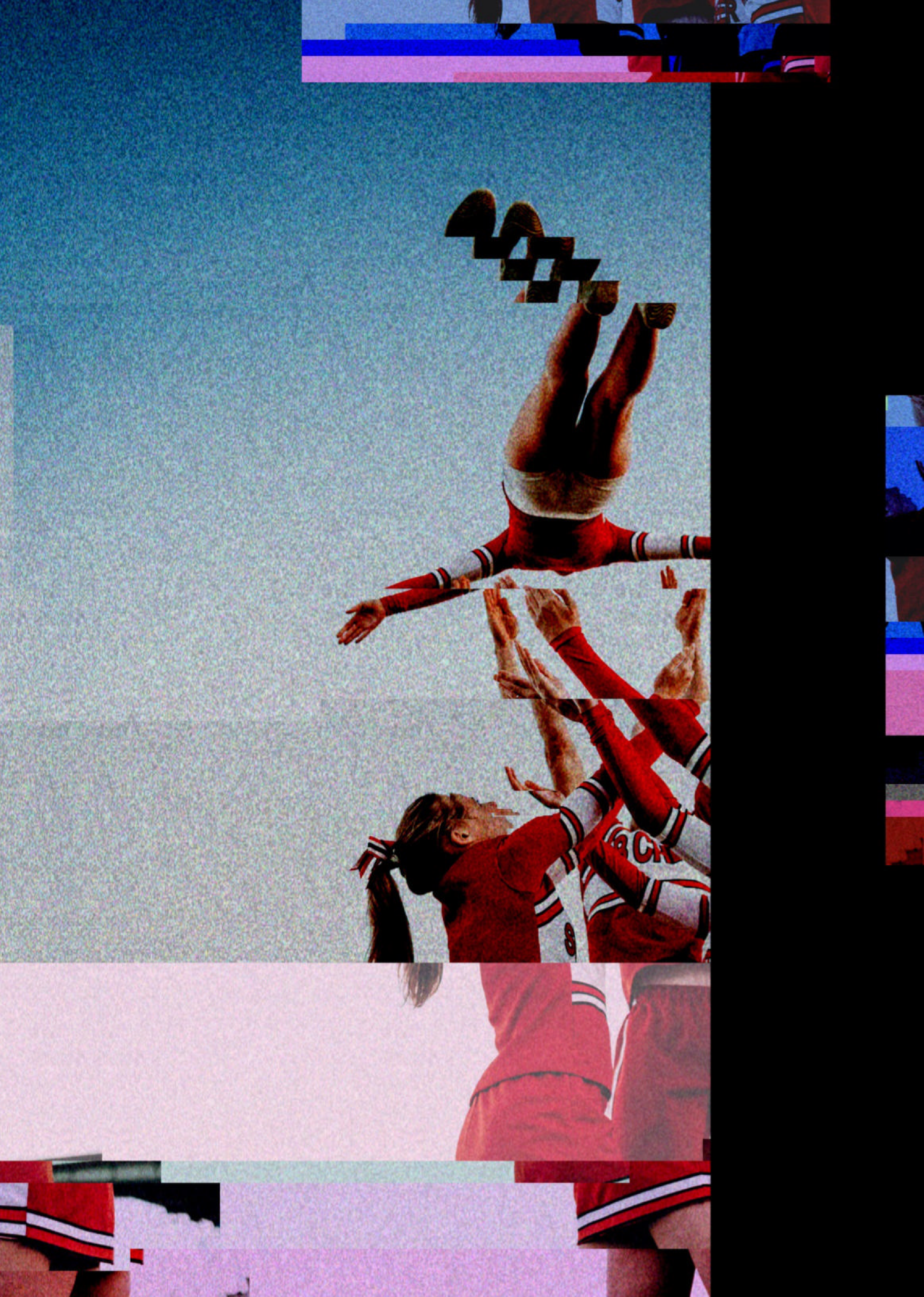
# DEEP FAKE

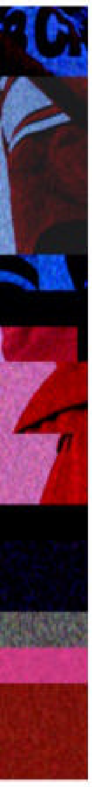
Last year, a small-town cheer mom was accused of doctoring a video to harass another teen on her daughter's squad. The scandal went viral, igniting national fears about the dangers of counterfeit-video technology. And that, it turns out, is only the *beginning* of a very confusing, very bizarre story.

Words by **KELLI MARÍA KORDUCKI**

Photo illustrations by **AMY WONG**







DOYLESTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA—POPULATION 8,300—IS JUST AN HOUR north of downtown Philadelphia, close enough to share Philly's accent and an occasional FM radio signal. But it's otherwise a different universe. Country-road billboards market deer-proof plants; a sign advertising a "Goats N Hoes" farm may or may not be ironic.

Just east of the airport, tucked away on the outskirts of town, the training facility of the Victory Vipers All-Stars—a local competitive cheer squad—is situated in a vinyl-sided industrial warehouse next to an auto parts store. On a typical weekday evening, a steady stream of minivans and SUVs cycles in and out of the parking lot, lining up to deposit or collect ponytailed, water-bottle-toting athletes in T-shirts and cheer shorts. Team sports are life here in Bucks County, where one player's town might be a half-hour drive from another's. Your squad becomes your world.

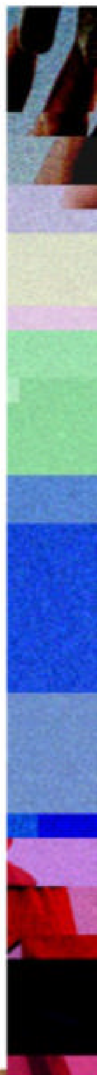
Last year, before the pandemic temporarily closed the gym, Madi Hime was 16, a Victory Viper who had recently joined the team. She fit right in with the other cheerleaders, documenting their lip syncs and dance routines on Instagram and TikTok (where Madi has almost 100,000 followers). Even during the competition off-season, the Vipers spent a lot of time together: Cheer training happens year-round, typically three days per week. Athletes need to maintain peak conditioning in order to pull off precise aerial stunts, and they need to work as a group. Any false move or miscommunication can cost points in a high-stakes competition. It can also mean a sprained ankle, a fractured wrist, or worse.

Madi was both a "flyer" and a "base," meaning she alternated between soaring through the air and helping support others who did. Her teammate Allie Spone was a full-time flyer—a more exalted designation on the cheer scene. But although intra-team competition could be intense, the girls got along just fine, says Allie. She was even at the sleepover where the video that would soon make national headlines was allegedly filmed.

It was a particularly tense period—July 2020, when the gym was struggling to stay open, stave off COVID-19, and hold team tryouts. And then one of the Vipers coaches got an anonymous text. The footage was grainy and lo-res, but the subject was unmistakable: Petite and blonde, it was Madi Hime, nonchalantly pulling from a blue vape pen, releasing a controlled plume of artificially flavored smoke into the air. The angle was too close to make out where she was, or with whom, but she seemed to know she was being filmed. Her eyes flitted toward the camera and she laughed, looking casual, relaxed, a little defiant.

The vaping video was a clear violation of the Victory Vipers All-Stars' code of conduct. But when Madi was confronted, she denied that the video was of her. "I went in the car and started crying," she later recalled on *Good Morning America*. "I was like, 'That's not me on video.' I thought if I said it that no one would believe me, because obviously there's proof. It's a video. But the video was obviously manipulated."

Madi's mother, Jennifer Hime, believed her and reported the video to local police. She added that her daughter had been receiving threatening messages for the past month from an unknown number—including ones saying things like "you should kill yourself"—as well as photos of herself seemingly doctored to make her appear nude and drinking alcohol. Two other squad moms also reported receiving anonymous messages: One got photos of her daughter in a bikini with captions written over the images regarding "toxic traits, revenge, dating boys,



and smoking," per the criminal complaint. Another got a text saying her daughter was "drinking at the shore, smokes pot, and uses 'AttentionWh0re69' as a screen name." Police traced the texts to the messaging platform Pinger. It led to a single, unexpected source: Allie's mom, Raffaela Spone.

Raffaela was eventually arrested on six counts of misdemeanor harassment and cyber harassment of a child. But that's not what spun the case into an international scandal. In the criminal complaint, Hilltown Township police officer Matthew Reiss declared that the video of Madi vaping had the hallmarks of a "deepfake," "where a still image can be mapped onto an existing video and alter the appearance of the person in the video to show the likeness of the victim's image instead." In his telling, he'd arrested a middle-age suburban mom for wielding the power of advanced AI technology against her daughter's competition, creating a fake video so uncannily convincing that it could have gotten Madi kicked off the team.

For a small-town police department—and a district attorney up for reelection—the idea was far too tantalizing to keep quiet. During a press conference in March of this year, Bucks County DA Matt Weintraub announced the allegation to the world, proclaiming, "This tech is now available to anyone with a smartphone. Your neighbor down the street, somebody who holds a grudge, we just have no way of knowing." It's also "another way for an adult to now prey on children," he added.

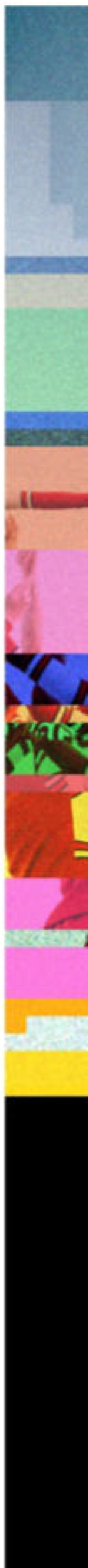
It all seemed a little *Drop Dead Gorgeous*—the '90s cult classic about a mom on a beauty pageant murder spree—but make it cheer and updated for the digital age. Because who needs the threat of physical violence when it's possible to ruin someone's life using nothing but social media photos and a phone? The Himes appeared on the *Today* show and *GMA*, where their ordeal was framed as a warning to parents everywhere. Raffaela's mug shot ran on websites across the internet.

It took just two months for the DA's case to completely unravel.

EVEN IF YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF A DEEPFAKE BEFORE, you've seen the technology behind it in action. Think: apps like Face Swap Live and Reface that transpose your friend's face onto Ariana Grande's body to hilarious effect. Or the uncanny series of "Tom Cruise" videos that took TikTok by storm earlier this year, merging publicly available images of the actor's face with footage of a professional Tom Cruise impersonator close-talking to the camera and teeing up a golf swing.

It's all so new that the term didn't even exist until 2017, when a Reddit user coined it to describe mostly crude, mostly pornographic videos that superimposed celebrity faces onto adult performers' bodies. The images have gotten more realistic as the technology has gotten smarter—but contrary to Weintraub's claims, making a truly convincing deepfake right now isn't as simple as watching a YouTube tutorial and photoshopping a few pics. In reality, you need specialized AI software that uses machine-learning algorithms to collect data from hundreds, even thousands, of pictures of somebody's face (which is significantly easier for celebrities, who have pages and pages of Google Images search results, than for the average person). The program then creates a digital copy of that face and can replicate its distinct movements: the curling of a lip, the arching of an eyebrow.

In 2021, it's "very, very unlikely" that, say, a cheer parent with no tech expertise would be able to wield this technology to produce an authentically

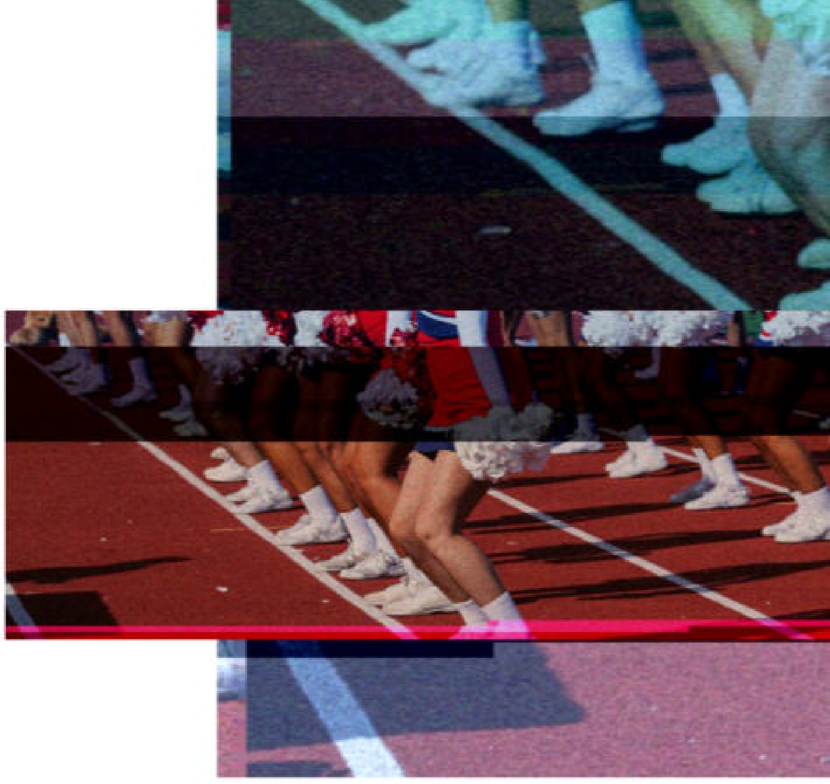


"DEEPFAKES DON'T JUST MAKE THINGS LOOK REAL. THEY ALSO PROVIDE A WAY TO DISMISS REAL THINGS AS FAKE."

convincing deepfake, says Henry Ajder, a leading researcher and policy adviser on deepfakes, disinformation, and media manipulation. He estimates that the process would require sophisticated equipment and take even the most highly skilled artist months. And he saw plenty of issues with the Madi video: the awkward angles, the smoke, the vape pen hovering over her face—these would be borderline impossible to fake, he says, period.

"I'm not saying that this mom didn't do anything, but to me, it's a fact that this video is real and that this girl was just denying that she was in this video," says Chris Umé, the Belgian visual effects and AI artist behind the Tom Cruise clips. After the video went viral, Ajder took to Twitter to call it a *fake* deepfake, and many of the world's preeminent experts, including Umé, agreed. Ajder is especially critical of media outlets for running with the story without bothering to speak to any experts, let alone ask police how they assessed the footage. According to him, there are only a handful of people in the U.S. capable of properly vetting a deepfake, "using specific computational forensic techniques, going through it frame by frame to comb for clues to be able to say with authority if it is real or not." When the *Daily Dot* eventually asked Reiss, the police officer, whether he ran a metadata analysis on the video, he admitted that he'd simply made a "naked eye" judgment call.

The sloppy police work didn't end there: The criminal complaint against Raffaela details threatening texts she allegedly sent to Madi—but the department has never provided evidence of their existence to Raffaela's legal counsel or to the public. At a hearing in July, a digital-forensics expert who'd made a complete copy of Raffaela's confiscated phone testified that it contained no deepfakes, pictures of any of the girls, texts to the girls, or apps used to create deepfakes or nudes. (A Hilltown Township Police detective admitted on the stand that he had never even bothered to look at Madi's phone.) It also came to light that one of the supposed "harassing" texts received by Madi (which contained the words "bark bark ruff ruff" and poop emojis) had actually been traced to…a 17-year-old boy named Ethan.



Unrelated but even more disturbing: Early in the proceedings, Reiss was arrested on multiple felony counts of possession of child pornography; he resigned from the department, but his flawed report remains on record.

This spring, after the "cheerleading deepfake" story had already gone global, the Bucks County DA's office quietly dropped the deepfake accusation while continuing to pursue the less sensational harassment charges against Raffaela. And in a dramatic turnaround, both the DA and the police department have gone silent, declining to answer questions about the case. (When contacted for this story, the only response was a DA spokesperson's denial that media manipulation was the reason for their charges.) After initially taking their story to morning shows, Madi and Jennifer have also stopped talking and did not respond to multiple requests for comment on this story.

With the deepfake allegations off the table, it's unlikely that the vaping video will ever see its day in court. But experts maintain that the clip would have been nearly impossible for Raffaela to fake, which leaves us, in all likelihood, here: A teen—like practically any other teen in history—broke the rules, got caught, didn't want to get in trouble, and so denied it. The real trouble came when a local police department was so eager to believe the innocence of a blonde-haired, blue-eyed cheerleader that they blinded themselves to the facts.

There is no one who looks particularly virtuous in this disastrously mishandled saga, just idiotic law enforcement, a gullible press and public, a mom who (allegedly) sent questionable tattling and malicious messages, and a couple of teens who did not ask for any of this but will now have their names attached to a notorious case and possible lifetime of unfortunate SEO.

The actually real—and terrifying—thing? In the future, those teens could be any of us.

THE ACTUALLY REAL—
AND TERRIFYING—THING?
IN THE FUTURE,
THOSE TEENS COULD
BE ANY OF US.

Experts predict that in as soon as five or six years and with more user-friendly deepfake tech, even amateurs will be able to create a decent counterfeit video. And as the cheer case foreshadows, these videos won't even have to be that good to implicate someone in a crime or exonerate them of one—because police and local prosecutors aren't trained to tell the difference.

This phenomenon has been dubbed the "liar's dividend," the idea that the existence of deepfakes can be weaponized to undermine the truth. As Ajder explains, "Deepfakes don't just make things look real. They also provide a way to dismiss real things as fake." Umé adds—and the more mainstream the concept becomes, the bigger its risk—that "this is something we're going to face a lot in the future, people denying that they were being shown on video, even if there's video proof." Which is not to say that Madi did anything especially shocking by denying she had vaped on video. But it *is* to suggest that what happened to Madi points to a scary future in which all digital evidence is essentially suspicious—and the only truth is the one each of us (or the internet) chooses to believe.

Insidious actors are already using this to their advantage. After the video of George Floyd's murder by police officer Derek Chauvin went viral in May 2020, Winnie Heartstrong, a former Republican congressional candidate from Missouri, cooked up a deepfake conspiracy to discredit the footage, claiming that Floyd had actually died years earlier and that his face had been mapped onto the body of a former NBA player to stir up racial tensions. The lie didn't stick, possibly because the concept of deepfakes was still relatively unfamiliar. But that's changing fast—along with the technology itself—which will only fuel confusion and blur lines with potentially catastrophic results, especially when it comes to legal cases involving things like police brutality, revenge porn, and even murder.

"All it takes is for one or two high-profile cases involving deepfakes to go awry for other cases to be tainted," says New York attorney Annie Seifullah, whose work focuses on bringing justice to victims of harassment and abuse. "Once we have this doubt, this poison that's been poured in our ear that it could be manipulated, then we really are in another level of the post-truth world."

That law enforcement is woefully unprepared for this new world cannot be overstated. "The systems and the people who are meant to protect us against false accusations or inspect evidence to see if it's real are not equipped to do this," adds Seifullah. "It's just so scary to think about."

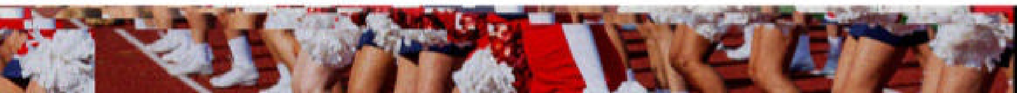
**IN THE END, MADI LEFT THE VICTORY VIPERS. SHE NOW CHEERS** at a gym nearly an hour and a half away, across the Delaware River in a cushier enclave of suburban New Jersey.

Allie quit cheerleading altogether. She says she misses it sometimes, but after everything that's happened, she can't imagine going back. (The two girls haven't communicated since last year.) The harassment case against her mother drags on. As of mid-August, Raffaela's counsel was awaiting a judge's decision on the future of the case. It could go to trial or be dropped completely. The cloud of doubt, though, will linger.

Raffaela herself denies any wrongdoing and declined to comment for this story. But her attorney did offer this: If Raffaela had been guilty, if she were truly going to doctor a video to make it look incriminating, why make it about vaping?

Why not something worse?

SOURCE IMAGES: GETTY IMAGES.



# The newbie's guide to getting inject and not regretting it

Pls read before allowing needles *anywhere* near your face.

No glitter was harmed in the making of this story.

Words by **RUBY BUDDEMEYER**

Photographs by **JEFFREY WESTBROOK**

PROPS: WENDY SCHELAH.

# ables

**THERE'S NO** bigger, buzzier, more talked-about thing in beauty right now than injectables. And the numbers don't lie: According to a new *Cosmo* poll, around one-third of you have already gotten fillers or Botox, and more than half of you are interested in trying them in the future.

TBH, I'm not surprised. In 2020 alone, facial injectables were a $13.4 billion (!) business. Some experts attribute this popularity to the pandemic and the infamous "Zoom effect," which, okay, fine, it makes sense that we'd start thinking about every little line on our faces after staring at ourselves on screens for more than a year straight. But also, unlike previous generations, millennials and Gen Zers have grown up around injectables. We see them via celebs and influencers, in marketing campaigns all over social media, and inside aesthetically pleasing shops (sup, Alchemy 43, Ject, and Peachy) that pop up in our neighborhoods. At this point, we've been so exposed to injectables for so long that they just feel…normal.

Still. Normal doesn't equal necessary. And you can't talk about how "everywhere" injectables are without asking the obvious: Do any of us really need them (or any face work, for that matter) at all? From my POV, everyone should answer that Q for themselves and weigh the risks and benefits personally. Because, hi, injectables are still a cosmetic procedure. Which, my friends, is exactly why I put together this guide.

## INJECTABL

| | What they are | Brand names to know |
|---|---|---|
| 1 **Neurotoxins** | Botulinum toxin type A temporarily smooths fine lines and wrinkles caused by repeated facial expressions. Once injected, it blocks the nerve signals to your facial muscles, preventing them from contracting. | Botox, Dysport, Xeomin, Jeuveau |
| 2 **Dermal fillers** | These are gel-like substances that get injected into the skin to smooth wrinkles and plump up cheeks, lips, and jawlines. They're made with hyaluronic acid (HA), calcium hydroxyapatite (CaHA), poly-L-lactic acid (PLLA), and more. | **HA:** Juvederm, Restylane, Belotero<br>**CaHA:** Radiesse<br>**PLLA:** Sculptra |

## ES 101

| What they're best for | How long they take to work | How long they last | The average cost | The pain level | Downtime and side effects |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **BOTOX:** smoothing frown lines (between the brows and on the forehead) and crow's-feet (corner of the eyes)<br>**DYSPORT, XEOMIN, JEUVEAU:** smoothing vertical and horizontal lines between and above the brows | You'll see some results after 3 to 5 days and the full effect after 2 weeks. | 3 to 4 months. | It varies, depending on who's injecting you and how much you need (it's measured by "units" and most people typically need 20 to 30 to smooth their forehead), but it can cost $250 to $500 per treatment area. | Think of it as a series of sharp, quick pinches—it's super brief, but most derms offer numbing cream if your pain tolerance is low. | There's zero downtime, although you might have a little swelling or bruising. FYI, there are some risks for complications like headaches and droopy eyelids (see page 95). |
| **HA:** adding volume and definition to lips and cheeks, filling in acne scars, plumping fine lines<br>**CaHA:** smoothing frown lines and smile lines, enhancing cheeks<br>**PLLA:** filling smile lines | You'll get fairly immediate results, although it can take 2 weeks to see the full effects of HA and CaHA. Expect 4 to 6 weeks for the full effect of PLLA to show up. | 6 to 12 months for HA, but the others can last from 1 to 2 years. | Around $500 to $1,500 per syringe (for reference: lip injections can start with 1 syringe, whereas cheeks need at least 2). | You might be treated with a topical anesthetic, and most fillers themselves include lidocaine, which helps make things more comfy during/after your treatment. You'll feel a sharp prick, light pressure, and a little throbbing. | Minor swelling, bruising, and temporary redness can def happen. Look out for rarer side effects like raised bumps under the skin, hypersensitivity, and extreme pain. |

> **"Injectables aren't stigmatized anymore—I feel like they're almost celebrated."**
>
> —DENDY ENGELMAN, MD

## How to find the right provider for you

1

### Skip the Groupon spas and choose a board-certified dermatologist or plastic surgeon.

You're putting a needle into your face—so even if that deal is super tempting, you want to see a legit pro instead, one who understands placement, facial anatomy, and dosage. Make sure your injector does these procedures on a regular, daily basis, says Melissa Kanchanapoomi Levin, MD, board-certified dermatologist and founder of Entière Dermatology. Bc keep in mind: The doctor who treats your acne may be board certified but have minimal experience with injections, which won't do you any favors.

2

### Make sure your provider shares your aesthetic vision.

Even if a derm knows how to inject, they may not vibe with your style (as in, if you aren't into Kylie Jenner lips, you'll want to see a derm who uses a light hand). This is where your internet stalking skills come in. Comb through your provider's IG or website to get a sense of their look—it's basically a portfolio of their work—and jot down what you do/don't like. Also take a look at their staff's faces, since derms usually treat them too, says Shereene Idriss, MD, board-certified dermatologist at Idriss Dermatology.

3

### Don't hold back in your consultation.

The whole point is to share your goals with your provider and make sure everyone's on board before you get injected (your face is basically a walking advertisement for your derm, so the consult should really go both ways). Come with a list of questions and concerns, bring in photos (ideally a pic of yourself that you particularly love, since celeb references are only beneficial if you have a similar facial structure), and get super specific about your ideal end result.

4

### Think it over and weigh your options.

You aren't obligated to go through with your treatment if you aren't ready. In NYC and most major cities, consults can cost up to $250 (they aren't covered by insurance, FYI), and if you do move forward, that fee will serve as a credit toward your Botox or filler. But if anything feels off about your provider, Dendy Engelman, MD, board-certified dermatologic surgeon at Shafer Clinic Fifth Avenue, says it's better to "thank them and go find someone you feel good about."

**Derms say it isn't rare for patients to post their filler or Botox appointments on social—whether they have 100 or 100,000 followers.**

# 4

# injectable myths busted

It's normal to be scared of the unknown—but some of the most common fears derms hear from patients are fueled by worst-case scenarios (ty, *Botched*). Let's break 'em down together.

MYTH 1

**My face is going to look f*cked up if/when I stop getting treated.**

"Your face isn't going to fall or sag if you stop getting Botox or filler—it's going to go back to your baseline," says Dr. Levin. That said, your perception of your baseline might change over time, especially once you start altering your facial proportions, says Dr. Idriss. That's why she never treats patients without baseline photos that she refers to at every visit.

MYTH 2

**Botox and filler are going to make me look fake or frozen.**

The scary *Housewives* look comes from either (1) too much Botox (more units = less movement) or (2) a bad injector. Try to find a provider who will tell you no from time to time. "If you're asking for filler each time you go to the derm and the injector is giving it to you each time, you may want to consider reevaluating," says Dr. Engelman. "You want somebody who has a neutral eye."

MYTH 3

**My eyelids are going to get droopy as hell if I pick up Botox.**

Proper aftercare is important to prevent droopy eyelids—avoid touching or rubbing your face for at least four hours post-injection, otherwise you run the risk of literally moving your Botox (it's rare, but it can happen). "We place the neuromodulator in a specific area for a reason, so we don't want it to move or shift—even in the slightest," says Dr. Levin.

MYTH 4

**I'm stuck with my injectables if I end up hating them.**

Botox lasts for only three to four months, so it'll be gone soon enough. HA fillers can be softened or dissolved entirely with an enzyme called hyaluronidase, says Dr. Levin. It's by no means a magic eraser—it's pricey, it usually takes a few appointments, and it's not exactly comfortable—so you still want to be mindful before getting injected.

## AND 4 MORE WAYS TO USE NEUROTOXINS

Some of which are "off label," aka not FDA approved, but still performed safely on the reg.

1. **Lip flips:** A teeny bit of neurotoxin is injected to relax the muscles above your lips, causing your upper lip to gently "flip out" for a fuller, poutier look.

2. **Chronic migraines:** Botox can help block them in some people when it's injected into specific points around the face, head, and neck.

3. **TMJ disorder and bruxism:** By weakening the masseter muscle (which moves your jaw), Botox can help stop involuntary clenching and grinding.

4. **Excessive sweating:** An injection can block the nerves that activate your sweat glands in the armpits, hands, and feet when prescription antiperspirants aren't enough.

# IN MY nightstand

Person-who-does-it-all **Brandy** took a quick break to share her sleep secrets, and yes, Doritos are involved.

By TAMARA FUENTES

**My overall nightstand vibe**
An organized mess.

**What's on top**
Pens, a journal, hand sanitizer, and a thermos for my Ginger Honey Crystals tea.

**And always inside**
My remote.

**My snack sitch**
A bag of Cool Ranch Doritos.

**What I steal from my partner's side**
I'm single and not interested in a mingle....

**And what I wouldn't want my mom to find**
My nightstand life is pretty PG!

**Nighttime reading**
An iPad that's loaded with my favorite books.

**What I fall asleep to**
Meditation music. Or sometimes tennis.

**When it comes to alarms, I...**
Trick myself into feeling like I have an extra hour to sleep by setting my alarm for an hour earlier.

Fun fact: These earrings also function as pillows.

**HI, WATCH THIS**

Brandy's back on TV in ABC's musical series *Queens.*

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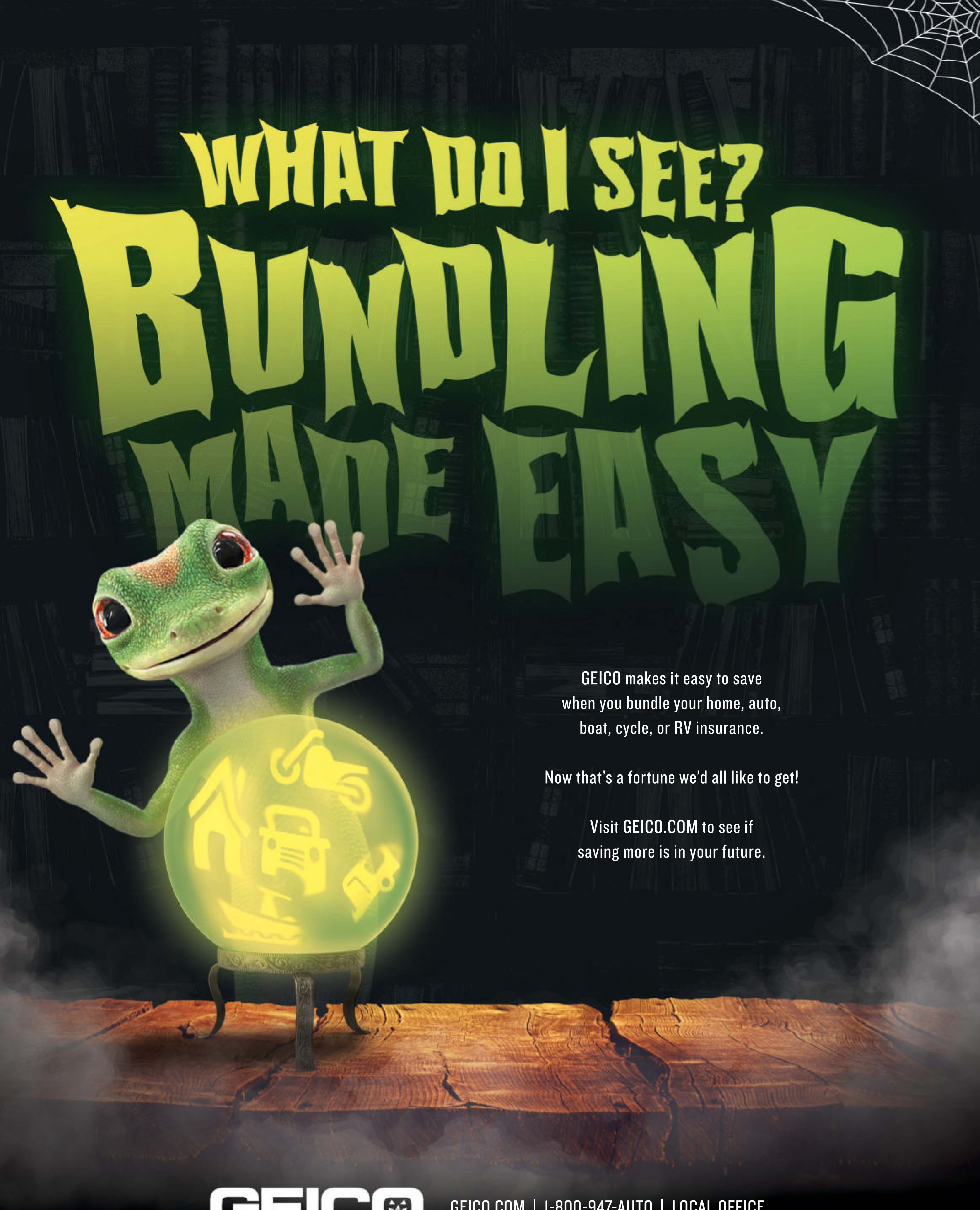

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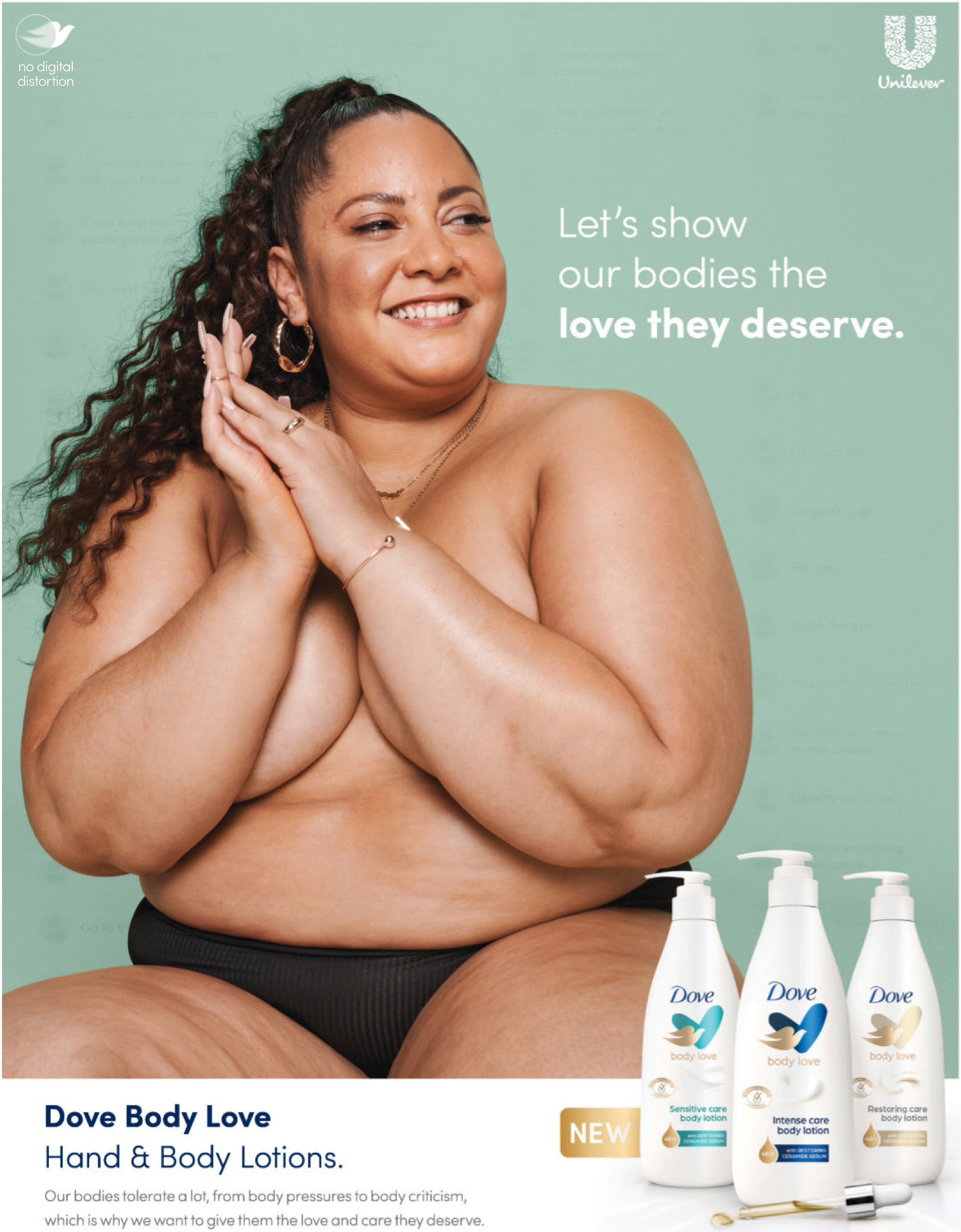
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